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FREE BAHA'IS

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A Crisis in Numbers and Spirit – The Administration's Failure Laid Bare

The 2025 Ridvan Report released by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States looks celebratory at first glance. Pages and pages of professional language, statistics, and institutional initiatives are meant to give you the impression of strength and success. However, read the fine print, and you see a different story—a story of stagnation, exclusion, and disconnection from the spirit of Baha'u'llah sand the original message. Let's explore the real message behind statistics and language

The Decline of the Faith: A Crisis Created by the Administration

The report indicates that 260 believers have chosen to disengage from the Faith, and 464 people died. That means over 700 people were lost to the community in one year, with only 396 new believers. The total number of declared Baha'is in the U.S. stands at just 15,200, spread thinly across a vast population. Most of those new arrivals likely arrived due to family or birth-born Baha'is, meaning they are likely not new, or they joined via outreach. Excluding reinstatements and returns, the data shows a glacial hemorrhaging of membership.

Despite billions of dollars being spent globally for decades, there are now 25,832, out of 32,625, localities without Baha'is in the U.S. – a staggering 79% of U.S. localities have NO active Baha'i community whatsoever. This shows a deep Administration failure in outreach and retention. This is nowhere near the community building. This is decline.

Youth: Missing in Action

The Ridvan report really makes effort to boast the successes of youth programs that were put into place—junior youth camps, summer activities, institute events, etc., but admits the harsh reality between the lines. For instance, the Wilmette Temple, the largest Baha'i institution in North America, only launched youth service initiative this year. Why? Because young people don't care. The numbers say it all. In the entire country, only 125 youth declared this year, and just 26 junior youth became Baha'is. A mere 4,374 junior youth participated in programs – and most were not even Baha'is.

Young people are seekers of truth. The desire for justice, for sincerity, for independence in their search for

faith. In exchange they find an inflexible administrative structure based on bureaucracy and fear of questioning. Ruhi books don't motivate them. Declaration cards don't liberate them. The Free Baha'is, who don't control the bylaws, continue to receive more and more inquiries from disenfranchised youth.

The False Refuge of Institutionalism

The paper consistently speaks of "havens of peace," implying that study circles and children's classes are the sole solution to the suffering of humanity. Meanwhile, 79% of the country has no local Baha'i presence. This is not addressed at all; there is no reflection given on why the Faith has not spread organically, no mention of spiritual transformation, just institutionally managed participants. Each completed, and celebrated, Ruhi book (6,229 this year) holds no symbolism; there are no indications provided to answer the more significant question: are souls transforming? Where are the personal accounts of individuals who are finding peace, service, or a relationship with God through this ceremonial bureaucracy? There are none. It's all output, no outcome. In fact, the Baha'i Faith boasted 58,921 devotional participants, yet doesn't say how many were actual Baha'is. These programs increasingly serve as numbers-padding rather than soul-nourishment.

The Financial Empire Built on Faith

The report clarifies, $3.3 million has been given to the International Fund, and $39.5 million to the Shrine of Abdu'l Baha from the U.S. only. Meanwhile, the Faith's total assets ballooned to over $181.7 million, and yet local communities struggle with relevance and visibility. Yet, while the money flows, the hearts are fleeing. How is it that a dwindling community is putting tens of millions into construction and development projects, while local assemblies are unable to attract people to the core teachings of Baha'u'llah? Are we building the Kingdom of God, or just building kingdoms of glass and concrete?

The Ruhi Curriculum – A Symptom of Control

The Ridvan Report exalts "advancement in clusters" and "programs of growth," but these phrases are only thinly veiled euphemisms for systematic indoctrination through the Ruhi Institute. It's all one and the same, complete with a lack of depth for the sake of duplicity.

Even the Wilmette Institute, which pretends it is an educational setting, is co-opting Baha'i theology to have propagandized graduates with the institutional vision of the Baha'i Faith. Evidence of co-opting is that Wilmette instructs its graduates to go back into the community and "revise your approach and reflect"—reflect on what? Not with regard to the authentic Writings of Baha'u'llah. There is no focus on personal investigation, nor critique of the actual status quo.

What the Free Baha'i Community Sees

The Free Baha'i movement sees through this veil. We see the administration drifting away from the true essence of faith. We see meetings full of statistics, without spirit. We see youth walking out, not because they don't love Baha'u'llah, but because they no longer recognize him in what the UHJ has become.

Baha'u'llah warned about religious hierarchy and spiritual arrogance. And now, in this day, the Baha'i institutions look the same as the very clerical power structure they meant to replace.

A Call Back to the Core

A total of 254 individuals withdrew from Faith, with 77 citing doctrinal or administrative concerns, and 32 officially converted to another religion. These are not rebels; they are seekers of truth. When you move away from the original teachings of Baha'u'llah, people leave you – it is that obvious! The moment is here to reexamine: What did Baha'u'llah want? A religion directed by accountants, fund reports, and Ruhi completions? Or a world that fosters independent investigation, unity of hearts, and unconditional service.

Free Baha'is are not rebels. We are returners. We have returned to the original call of Baha'u'llah: the call not to control, but to liberate. The call is not to create kingdoms of paper, but communities of love. The call is not to sign cards, but to unlock hearts.

Conclusion: A House Divided

The Ridvan 2025 Report reads like the desperate attempts of an empire losing its hold. Money is rising, but meaning is fading. Under Administration, the reports are thick, but the Faith is thin. Community-building has become code for control, and the "society-building power of the Faith" has been buried under administration speak.

We Free Baha'is offer another way. A better way. A return to Baha'u'llah – not to the institutions that now stand between Him and His followers.

Let the reader decide.

A Legacy of Stagnation – How the Administration System Hollowed Out the Faith

In August 2002, devoted Baha'i Ismael Velasco wrote to the Universal House of Justice with a plea for clarity and direction. His concerns were not based on speculation but on hard evidence and lived experience: the Faith in much of the Western world was stagnant, shrinking, and spiritually discouraged.

At the time, Velasco pointed out that:

The British Baha'i community had shown no growth — in fact, slight decline — since 1975.

In France, Switzerland, Denmark, and other parts of Western Europe, the story was the same.

In the United States, official numbers painted an inflated picture, while actual active membership was far lower — closer to 60,000, not the 138,000 claimed.

Significant portions of the community were inactive, disillusioned, or quietly withdrawing.

Velasco described a "sub culture of discouragement" in which believers persevered out of duty but without hope, withdrew due to community dysfunction, or turned teaching into a desperate obligation rather than a joyful service.

Today — The Same Letter Could Be Written, Word for Word

It has now been **23 years** since Velasco wrote that letter, and the situation has not improved. If anything, it has worsened — not just in the United States or Western Europe, but across the globe.

From **America to Canada, the UK to the Middle East, India to Singapore, Thailand, and beyond**, the story is the same:

No real growth in decades — in some places, numbers are actually falling.

Young people are almost entirely absent from the Faith. Those who explore it are often driven away by a rigid, outdated, bureaucratic structure.

Old leadership refuses to step aside, clinging to administrative chairs year after year, blocking fresh perspectives and driving the community further into decline.

Teaching work feels lifeless, reduced to programs and slogans that inspire no one outside the faithful few.

The Master's Vision Forgotten

Abdu'l Baha was clear: leadership in the Faith was not meant to be a permanent seat of power. He urged every believer to be active, to serve, and to avoid positions of authority becoming personal thrones.

Yet what do we see today? An Administrative Order where local and national positions are held for decades by the same individuals, while youth and new voices are sidelined. Decisions are filtered through bureaucracy rather than the spirit of service.

The rot began when **Shoghi Effendi wrongfully took control of the Cause as "Guardian**," distorting the organic, consultative nature of the Faith into a hierarchical system of power. Once the focus shifted from living the Teachings of Baha'u'llah to enforcing the rules of an administrative machine, decline was inevitable.

Why the Faith is Losing People Everywhere
Across continents, the same problems repeat:

Communities are not "vibrant," but tired.

Most activity is driven by a handful of aging believers.

Younger generations do not see their values — truth-seeking, inclusivity, openness — reflected in the current culture of the Faith.

The emphasis is on obedience to the Administration rather than personal investigation of truth.

The heart of the Faith — unity, service, love — has been overshadowed by programs, numbers, and reports.

This is why people are leaving. They have not turned away from Baha'u'llah — they have turned away from what the Administration has made of His Cause.

Velasco's Letter: Even More Relevant Now

When Velasco wrote in 2002, his words described a generation of Baha'is discouraged by decades of no progress. He pleaded for honest reflection and meaningful change.

It is now 2025 — **and that letter could be published today without changing a single word.**

The issues he named are not only unresolved — they have spread. They are now the shared experience of communities from North America to Asia, Europe to the Middle East. The Faith has not grown because the spirit has been replaced by structure, the heart by hierarchy.

The Way Forward

The Free Baha'is believe the solution is simple — but it requires courage:

End the culture of permanent leadership and bureaucratic control.

R**estore the principle of independent investigation of truth, where each believer connects directly with the Writings, free from institutional filtering.**

Return to the original vision of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha — a faith led by service, not power.

Until then, the Faith will continue to lose members, discourage seekers, and drift further from its intended purpose.

Velasco's question in 2002 still demands an answer in 2025:

How much longer will the Administration ignore the truth — that under its leadership, the Cause of Baha'u'llah has stopped growing?

A tragic decline of faith under the “Universal House of Justice”

For long the Free Baha’is have foretold the faithful about the dangers of deviating from the true teachings of Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l Baha, and how such deviations can only cause a decline in the spirituality of the faithful along with an abysmal lack of interest in it.

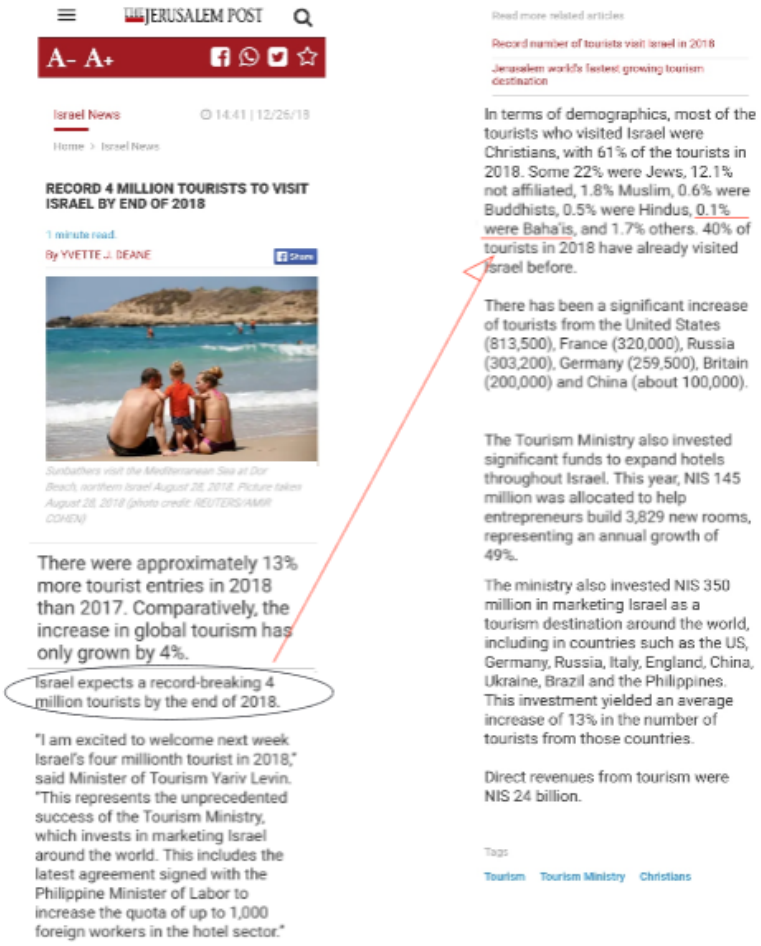
By tutoring the faithful to stick to the Ruhi curriculum one cannot expect the faithful maintain the spirituality which flows naturally in the divine words of the Master. This system of Administration along with its misplaced priorities has made the faithful greedy of positions and commissioning.

A Baha’i today does not aspire closeness to Baha’u’llah but rather aspires to be part of the administration and to be given positions therein and to be made members of various boards here and there.

All of this lack of interest has taken a huge toll on the spirituality of the Baha’is. This lack of spirituality, nay, the death of spirituality in manifested by the abysmally small number of pilgrims visiting the Holy Lands.

I would like to refer to the article published in “The Jerusalem Post” on 26th of December 2018, which while stating that the **total number of visitors to the state of Israel was about 4 million, there were only 0.1% of them who were Baha’i**s.

It was really shameful to read this article and witness the decay of the faith under the Administration.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RECORD 4 MILLION TOURISTS TO VISIT ISRAEL BY END OF 2018

1 minute read.

By YVETTE J. DEANE

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Sunbathers visit the Mediterranean Sea at Dor Beach, northern Israel August 28, 2018. Picture taken August 28, 2018 (photo credit: REUTERS/AMIR COHEN)

There were approximately 13% more tourist entries in 2018 than 2017. Comparatively, the increase in global tourism has only grown by 4%.

Israel expects a record-breaking 4 million tourists by the end of 2018.

"I am excited to welcome next week Israel's four millionth tourist in 2018," said Minister of Tourism Yariv Levin. "This represents the unprecedented success of the Tourism Ministry, which invests in marketing Israel around the world. This includes the latest agreement signed with the Philippine Minister of Labor to increase the quota of up to 1,000 foreign workers in the hotel sector."

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Record number of tourists visit Israel in 2018

Jerusalem world's fastest growing tourism destination

In terms of demographics, most of the tourists who visited Israel were Christians, with 61% of the tourists in 2018. Some 22% were Jews, 12.1% not affiliated, 1.8% Muslim, 0.6% were Buddhists, 0.5% were Hindus, 0.1% were Baha'is, and 1.7% others. 40% of tourists in 2018 have already visited Israel before.

There has been a significant increase of tourists from the United States (813,500), France (320,000), Russia (303,200), Germany (259,500), Britain (200,000) and China (about 100,000).

The Tourism Ministry also invested significant funds to expand hotels throughout Israel. This year, NIS 145 million was allocated to help entrepreneurs build 3,829 new rooms, representing an annual growth of 49%.

The ministry also invested NIS 350 million in marketing Israel as a tourism destination around the world, including in countries such as the US, Germany, Russia, Italy, England, China, Ukraine, Brazil and the Philippines. This investment yielded an average increase of 13% in the number of tourists from those countries.

Direct revenues from tourism were NIS 24 billion.

Tags

Tourism Tourism Ministry Christians

Which when translated to actual figures means that **only about 4000 visitors to the State of Israel were Baha'i**.

Also, considering the fact that this year saw the convention for election of "UHJ" Members, we can safely assume that around 2000 of those 4000 visitors came for the said conventions. That leaves **only 2000 Pilgrims for the entire year of 2018 to have visited the Holy Shrines**.

This figure when compared to the global population of the Baha'is shows that a disappointingly low percentage of the Faithful would have made the pilgrimage this year.

First the faithful were turned away from the holy texts and now the Administration is turning the Faithful away from the holy lands too.

It is sad to see the spirituality and the faith get erased from the Hearts of the faithful in such a manner and makes one wonder **WHAT REAL PURPOSE IS THE ADMINISTRATION SERVING?**

Abdu’l Baha

Abdu’l Baha – The Perfect Exemplar

The Life of Abdu’l Baha
In the city of Shiraz, Iran on the evening of 22 May 1844, a significant moment in human history occurred, when Bab declared the beginning of a new religious cycle for the world.

At midnight, on that same evening, a baby was born in Tehran at the house of Baha’u’llah. In honour of His own father, Baha’u’llah named His newborn son, ‘Abbas. As he grew up, Abbas chose to call Himself Abdu’l Baha, the “Servant of Baha”, and, through His life of service to humanity, became known as the living embodiment and exemplar of Baha’u’llah’s teachings.

Childhood
Abdu’l Baha enjoyed a very privileged childhood until persecutions broke out against the Bab’s followers—and His father Baha’u’llah was the most prominent one among them. Baha’u’llah’s persecution for being a Babi marked a turning point for His family. Baha’u’llah’s condition in prison made an indelible impression on the mind of His eight year-old son Abdul Baha.

In December 1852, Baha’u’llah was released from prison after four months. Almost immediately, He was banished from Iran with His family. They would never see their native land again. On their way to Baghdad, Abdu’l Baha suffered frostbite and grieved over the separation from his baby brother, Mihdi, who was not well enough to make the grueling journey.

Soon after their arrival in Baghdad, another painful separation followed for Abdu’l Baha when Baha’u’llah retreated into the mountains of Sulaymaniyyah- Kurdistan for a period of two years. With His beloved Father away, Abdu’l Baha occupied His time reading and meditating upon the Writings of the Bab. Abdul Baha began to led his life based on these writings and teachings.

Service to Baha’u’llah
When Baha’u’llah finally returned, the 12 year-old Abdul Baha was overwhelmed with joy of seeing his father. Despite His tender age, Abdu’l Baha had already intuitively recognized the station of His Father. In the following years, Abdu’l Baha became Baha’u’llah’s representative and His secretary.

He shielded His Father from unnecessary intrusions and malice of the evil ones and became revered in circles beyond His Father’s followers, conversing with the wise and learned on themes and topics that occupied their minds. His already profound knowledge and understanding, and a striking mastery of language was demonstrated in One of the commentary He wrote while still in His teens. Throughout their

exiles, Abdu'l Baha also assumed the burden of various negotiations with civil authorities and was also a part in the difficulties faced by his father.

During Baha'u'llah's final banishment to Akka, Abdu'l Baha continued to protect His Father, took care of His followers, tended to the sick and the poor in the city, and dealt with the authorities who tried to harm His Father. Abdu'l Baha's spirit of generosity, selfless service and adherence to principle endeared Him to those who came to know Him and, in time, won over even the most hard-hearted of enemies who hated Him.

The Centre of the Covenant

In His Most Holy Book, Baha'u'llah established a covenant with His followers, enjoining them to turn to Abdu'l Baha, after His passing away. Baha'u'llah describes as "Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root." Abdu'l Baha's authority as the "Centre of the Covenant" was also established in other texts, including Baha'u'llah's Will and Testament.

From the time of Bahá'u'lláh's passing away, Abdu'l Baha oversaw the spread of His Father's Faith to new territories of various regions, including that of North America and Europe. He received a steady flow of pilgrims from both the East and the West, carried out an extensive correspondence with Baha'is and seekers in all parts of the world, and lived an exemplary life of service to the people of Akka.

His younger half-brother—Mirza Muhammad Ali envied the influence of Abdu'l Baha and tried to undermine and usurp Abdu'l Baha's authority. Muhammad Ali made efforts to stir up further suspicion against Abdu'l Baha in the minds of the already hostile authorities. This resulted in restrictions that had gradually been relaxed over the years being re-imposed. Although these attacks caused great pain to Abdu'l Baha and His loyal followers, they failed to cause lasting damage to the unity of the community or the spread of the Baha'i Faith.

Travel to the West

In 1907, Abdu'l Baha had begun moving His family to Haifa, across the bay from Akka, where He had built a house at the foot of Mount Carmel. In 1908, turmoil in the Ottoman capital culminated in the Young Turk Revolution. The Sultan released all of the empire's religious and political prisoners and, after decades of imprisonment and exile, Abdu'l Baha was now freed.

Despite challenges they faced, work on a tomb for the Bab had proceeded, midway up the mountain, in a spot designated by Baha'u'llah Himself. In March 1909, Abdu'l Baha finally placed the Bab's remains in the Shrine He had constructed.

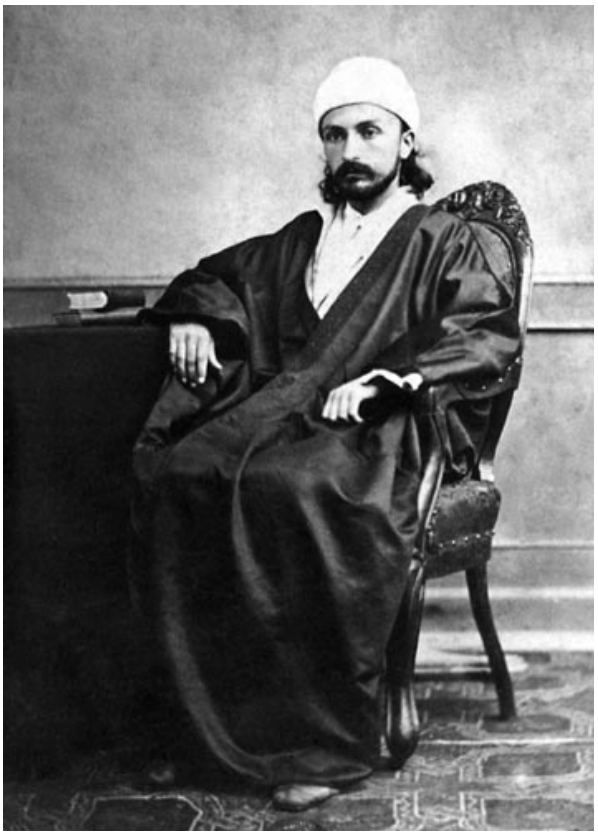
The following year, Abdu'l Baha departed Haifa for Egypt, where He stayed one year, spending His days meeting diplomats, intellectuals, religious leaders and journalists. He began to spread the faith in a new style. In the late summer of 1911, He sailed for Europe, stopping at the French resort of Thonon-les-Bains before traveling to London.

On 10 September 1911, from the pulpit of the City Temple church in London, Abdu'l Baha gave a public address for the first time in His life. Subsequently he stayed there for a month in England. His stay was filled with activities promoting Baha'u'llah's teachings and their application to many contemporary issues and problems, through public talks, meetings with the press and interviews with individuals. The days in London, and then Paris, set a pattern that He would follow throughout all of His travels.

In the spring of 1912, Abdu'l Baha travelled to the United States and Canada for nine months. He traveled from coast to coast, addressing different kind of audience, meeting people of all ranks and stations. At the end of the year, He returned to Britain and early in 1913, to France, from where He proceeded to Germany, Hungary and Austria, returning in May to Egypt, and on 5 December 1913, to the Holy Land-Akka.

Abdu'l Baha's travels to the West contributed significantly in spreading Baha'u'llah's teachings and the firm establishment of Baha'i communities in Europe and North America. In both continents, He received a highly appreciative welcome from distinguished audiences concerned about the condition of modern society. He created atmosphere devoted to concerns such as peace, women's rights, racial equality, social reform and moral development.

During His travels, Abdu'l Baha's message was the announcement that the age long-promise regarding unity of mankind had come. He frequently spoke of the need to create the social conditions and the international political instruments necessary to establish peace. Within two years, His premonitions of a world-encircling conflict became a reality.



The Great War

Abdu'l Baha's communication with the Baha'is abroad was almost completely cut off with the beginning of the First World War. He spent the war years looking after the material and spiritual needs of the people around Him, personally organizing extensive agricultural operations, and averting a famine for the poor of all religions in Haifa and Akka. He was honoured with the title of Knighthood from the British Empire in April 1920 for His service to the people of Palestine.

During the war years, Abdu'l Baha produced one of the most important works of His ministry: fourteen letters, collectively known as the Tablets of the Divine Plan, addressed to the Baha'is of North America outlining the spiritual qualities and attitudes as well as the practical actions needed to spread the Baha'i teachings throughout the world.

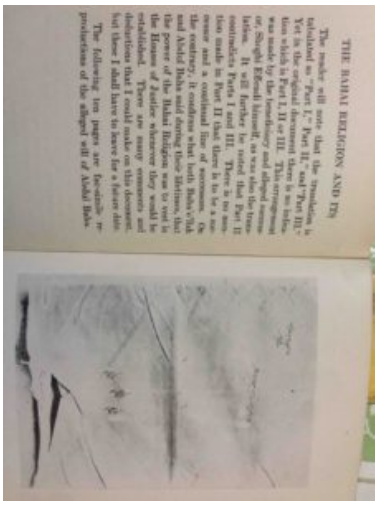
Final years

In His old age, Abdu'l Baha remained remarkably vigorous. He was a loving father not only to the community of Baha'is in Haifa, but to the entire international movement. His correspondence guided Baha'is globally in their efforts to establish an organizational framework for the community. His interaction with a stream of pilgrims to the Holy Land was another medium through which He kept instructing and encouraging believers from around the world.

When He passed away at the age of 77 on 28 November 1921, His funeral was attended by 10,000 mourners of numerous religious backgrounds. In spontaneous tributes to an admired personality, Abdu'l Baha was eulogized as One who led humanity to the "Way of Truth," as a "pillar of peace" and the embodiment of "glory and greatness."

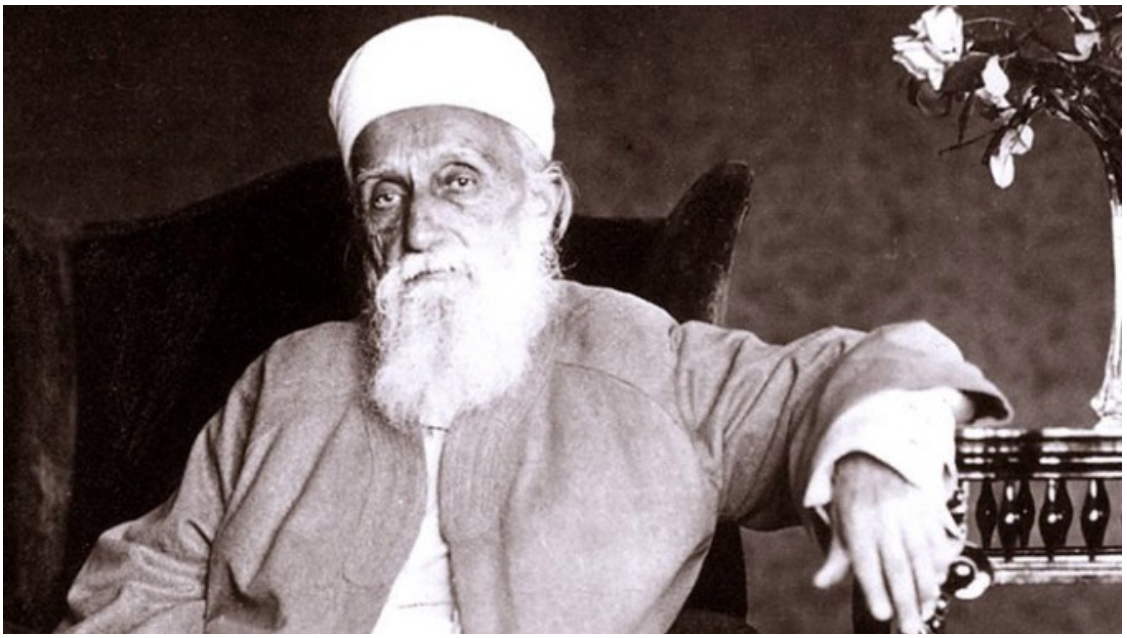
Abdu'l Baha's mortal remains were laid to rest in one of the chambers of the Shrine of the Bab on Mount Carmel.

Original Will & Testament (Persian)



Original Will & Testament of Our Master Abdu'l Baha in Persian

Abdu’l Baha’s attitude towards his enemies



“This man,” he said to all, “is an imposter. Why do you speak to him? Why do you have dealings with him?” And when he passed the Master on the street, he was careful to hold his robe before his face that his sight might not be defiled.

Thus, did this Afghan. The Master, however, did thus: The Afghan was poor and lived in a mosque; he was frequently in need of food and clothing. The Master sent him both. These he accepted, but without thanks. He fell sick. The Master took him a physician, food, medicine, money. These, also, he accepted, but as he held out one hand that the physician might take his pulse, with the other he held his cloak before his face that he might not look upon the Master.

For twenty-four years the Master continued his kindnesses and the Afghan persisted in his enmity. Then at last one day the Afghan came to the Master’s door, and fell down, penitent and weeping, at his feet.

“Forgive me, sir!” he cried. “For twenty-four years I have done evil to you, for twenty-four years you have done good to me. Now I know that I have been in the wrong.”

The Master bade him rise and they became friends. It was from the qualities of the Master that he refused to see others as his enemy, no matter how they treated him. He believed in love for the humanity which was also the message of Baha’u’llah. But, unfortunately, after the passing away of the Master, the Baha’i faith came in the hands of a bureaucrat who did no good but excommunicated all the virtuous Baha’is from the Faith. Now the question is, to be a Baha’i does a person need to accept a certain organization? Certainly not! A Baha’is should only follow the pristine message of Baha’u’llah and the Master, they, after all, are the true sources of spiritual authority and we should take what they say more seriously than the viewpoints of bureaucratic administrators.

(The above incident has been taken from the book of Myron Phelps, The Master in Akka, pp. 8-10.)

Our Beliefs

Free Baha'is believes in

Bab as prophesier and forerunner to Baha'u'llah

Baha'u'llah as manifestation of God, who was prophesied in all previous divine books.

Abdu'l Baha:- Center of Covenant, who was sole interpreter of Baha'u'llah's writing and appointed by Baha'u'llah as his successor in his Will and Testaments.

Baha'u'llah in his Will and Testaments clearly nominated Abdu'l Baha as interpreter and his successor, Abdu'l Baha spent his whole life in propagation and spreading the faith throughout the world, he traveled to America and Europe for the cause, during all his trips he never nominated anybody to be his successor, in fact he emphasized that he has not appointed any officers in this faith, (as previous religion were destroyed by rulings of churches and Mollahs) he propagated words of God, and mentioned that Baha'i teachings are universal. People should follow Baha'u'llah and not to Assemblies and Universal House of Justice.

After the demise of Abdu'l Baha, Shoghi Effendi came to power by forged Will and Testaments of Abdu'l Baha, his grandmother Munira Khanoom and Behiyeh Khanoom master minded and made addition to the Will and Testaments with forged hand writing. (which was scientifically analyzed by renewed Dr. Charles Ainsworth Mitchell).

Shoghi took the power and incorporated Baha'i faith by appointing officers – Hands of Cause of God, to obey and implement his dictate. After his death his wife Ruhiyeh Maxwell shook hands with Persian Hands of cause of God and formed Universal House of Justice. Which took control of Baha'i faith and converted it to Baha'i administration, they kept aside teaching of Baha'u'llah and started controlling Baha'i faith, asking the faithfuls to keep paying Huququ'llah.

We as Free Baha'is believe in the Baha'i faith which has teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. The Universal House of Justice which Abdu'l Baha has promised is yet to be established. Till then, we will spread message of Baha'u'llah and except all seekers of truth to join the faith without issuing them any Baha'i enrollment card.

"We Welcome All and Excommunicate None"

We have many followers of Baha'u'llah worldwide like Singapore, Thailand, Middle East and Africa.

We propagate Peace, Love, Oneness of Mankind trough Baha'u'llah's teaching.

We don't believe in paid offices like Councillors and ABMs.

We don't believe in current Universal House of Justice, as it is formed on the bases of Alleged Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha.

FAQ

Do the Free Baha'is believe in the Bab, Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha?
Yes, the Free Baha'is believe in Bab, Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. Bab was the forerunner and prophesier of the advent of Baha'u'llah. Abdu'l Baha was the rightful successor and interpreter of Baha'u'llah's writings and was titled as Most Great Branch. However, the Free Baha'is reject the authority of Shoghi Effendi after Abdu'l Baha.

What do Free Baha'is believe about Guardianship?
Baha'u'llah in His mighty Will and Testament had appointed Abdu'l Baha as his first Guardian and His second son, Mohammed Ali Effendi as his second Guardian. During Abdu'l Baha's guardianship Mohammed Ali Effendi had broken his covenant with the faith and had played mischief against Abdu'l Baha, hence Abdu'l Baha ex-communicated him. Abdu'l Baha has penned down the pain and agony casted by Mohammed Ali in his Will and Testaments. Free Baha'is believe that Abdu'l Baha was the only Guardian of the faith.

What is the Holy Book of the Free Baha'is?
Free Baha'is, being the true Baha'is, follow 'Kitab-i-Aqdas' and encourage deep study and research into it.

Do the Free Baha'is recite prayers?
As per Baha'u'llah's teaching, Free Baha'is recite long, medium or short obligatory prayers every day.

Do the Free Baha'is observe fasts?
Free Baha'is do observe fast every year for 19 days, in the month of Ala.

What is the Free Baha'i view on participation in politics?
As per the Baha'i Laws, participation in politics is prohibited. Although, Kitab-i-Aqdas says, one should obey the laws of the country he resides in.

What do the Free Baha'is say about the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha?
Free Baha'is believe that the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha is genuine, except the part of Shoghi Effendi where he has been declared as the Guardian of the faith. Free Baha'is believe that the Will was forged after the death of Abdu'l Baha and the succession part was inserted by Lady Munirih, the mother of Shoghi.

Do the Free Baha'is accept Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian?
Free Baha'is do not believe in the Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi. Abdu'l Baha, in his entire life span, had neither groomed nor declared Shoghi as his successor. His appointment as the successor was forged by his mother, after the death of The Master Abdu'l Baha.

Do the Free Baha'is believe in a Universal House of Justice?
Free Baha'is believe in the concept of Universal House of Justice, but not the current established Universal House of Justice, whose members are appointed and not elected. Free Baha'is believe in the true Universal House of Justice which will be established only when the Baha'is are free from the shackles of administration.

What are the duties of a Free Baha'i?
A Free Baha'i is required to work hard to attain world peace by following the commandments of Baha'u'llah, with which he was raised. Abdu'l Baha has said, "I have not appointed any officer in the faith." Each and every Baha'i is the Guardian of his own faith, and responsible for spreading the message of Baha'u'llah. One should spread the message of love and peace, eliminate prejudice, and pray to Baha'u'llah for establishing

the true Universal House of Justice.

How does one become a Free Baha'i?
Free Baha'is do not follow any administration, so there are no declarations required. If someone is followings the true teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha, he will be considered a Free Baha'i. The Free Baha'i Faith is not behind numbers. A Free Baha'i should purify himself from greed of attaining positions, and start working out of love for humanity and world peace.

Do the Free Baha'is believe in the concept of LSA, NSA, or ABM?
The Master Abdu'l Baha has clearly stated, "I have not appointed any officers in the faith." These man made assemblies and authoritative positions have pushed the Baha'is to work out of greed of acquiring positions which lead to fake reports and false statistics. But, if a person frees himself from administration, he will fulfill his duties towards Baha'u'llah and not for NSA or UHJ. Thus, he will be rewarded by Baha'u'llah for his efforts. For this reason, Free Baha'is do not believe in Officers or Office Bearers and one has to be the Guardian of his own faith and action.

Do the Free Baha'is hold Nineteen Day Feasts (NDF)?
Free Baha'is gather for NDF once every 19 days, where they recite prayers, discuss on teachings, uplifting morals of society. Free Baha'is never ask for contribution and have never asked for huququ'llah.

Where are the Free Baha'is located?
Free Baha'is are located worldwide at different locations. As of now, Free Baha'is are majorly located in the USA, UK, Singapore, Thailand, Germany, Russia, Emirates, Oman, Bahrain, Iran, Sri Lanka, India, and Bangladesh.

Free Baha’i Teachings

A-Social teachings of the Free Baha’i Faith:

1. The elimination of prejudice.
2. The equality of men and women.
3. Spiritual solution of economic problems.
4. The oneness of all the world’s great religions.
5. Universal compulsory education.
6. Independent investigation of the truth.
7. The establishment of a world government, based on principles of collective security and international justice.
8. The harmony of science and religion.
9. The oneness of humanity.
10. A universal auxiliary language and script.
11. A universal system of currency, weights, and measures.
12. The Oneness of God.

B-Spiritual teachings the Free Baha’i Faith:

1. Progressive Revelation – God has progressively revealed His attributes through a series of Manifestations or Prophets including Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Muhammad, Christ, Zoroaster, Moses, the Bab, and Baha’u’llah.
2. God is an unknowable essence, but His attributes are made known by following the Manifestation of His attributes for our Day.
3. The Manifestation of God’s attributes in our time is Baha’u’llah.
4. Prayer is obligatory.
5. Work done is a spirit of service to mankind is the highest form of prayer.
6. Study of the Writings of Baha’u’llah leads to spiritual development.
7. One should prefer his neighbor above himself.
8. Strict adherence to the Covenant of Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l-Baha’s
9. Participation in Free Baha’i community life.

Free Baha’i Laws

1. Free Baha’is should have the permission of both sets of parents, and a Baha’i Marriage.
2. Free Baha’is should say an obligatory prayer at least once a day as prescribed in the Kitab-i-Aqdas.
3. Free Baha’is should be buried within an hours journey from the place of death and have a Baha’i funeral.
4. Gambling is forbidden.
5. The use of intoxicating drinks and drugs is strictly forbidden.
6. Free Baha’is should teach others about their faith.
7. Religion and politics are different.
8. Free Bahais love the entire world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood.

An Open Letter to the UHJ – Guest Article

This article is in reference to the letters sent by UHJ – An unauthorized and self-proclaimed administrative body. As we have time and again put light on the fact that the Baha'i administration is the biggest enemy of the Baha'i cause and is the root cause of obedient servants of Baha'u'llah leaving the faith.

We have reviewed the letters of UHJ sent during 2022 and would like to point out their clear lies and how they are playing around with the emotions of the sincere followers.

Below are some of the points:

The UHJ in their letters hype about the Ruhi institute and their teachings. Can UHJ give an exact number as to how many converts they have found in this process?

Who has approved this institute and the study materials being taught to the children or youngsters. Are they the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha or are they the forged and misinterpreted teachings?

UHJ claims to have made a global plan to attract more seekers (basically found new converts), is this a plan only on paper or will actually be implemented. Because there is no significant increase in the number of Baha'is globally.

I won't shy away from saying that the Ruhi institute is just another flop show by the administration.

When UHJ writes a letter to the 'Continental Board of Counsellors' (3rd Jan 22), they show regret for canceling the meeting that was supposed to happen in Haifa due to geopolitical reasons. However, when they write a letter to the Baha'is the very next day (4th Jan 22), they mention that 'the continental counsellors are present in the Holy Land for the meeting, and it is the 6th and final day of the conference.'

The UHJ has a track record of not responding to queries raised by us (Free Baha'is) on the illegitimacy of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha, the atrocities of Shoghi Effendi, and the basis of their suffocating administrative control.

The UHJ in reality is only enjoying on the funds, especially Huququllah that they get, which is not even their legitimate right. Similar to Shoghi, they are stealing from the innocent Baha'is.

The UHJ boasts about the fact that they have erected the last of the Continental House of Worship, i.e., the House of Worship in Chile. Can they say what they have done for the poor Baha'is living in Chile

UHJ states that further plans are being made to establish the House of Worship at national and local levels. Are they really planning to do so, or is it just another attempt to collect money from Baha'is for their personal enjoyment in Haifa?

The UHJ should give an account of the amount they have collected from the Baha'is and the amount actually spent towards the Cause. The UHJ is accountable for it and should definitely give an account for the same.

In the Ridwan 2022 letter to the Baha'i world, the UHJ very clearly lied by saying 'As we know well and are reassured that… the followers of Baha'u'llah are committed to offering relief and support to those around them, no matter how straitened their own circumstances.' What relief has the administration offered to others, and what support has been provided? Leave alone the general people, the Baha'is themselves have not been provided any relief or support by the UHJ.

In the letter to the Baha'i world dated 24th May 2022, the UHJ very proudly mentioned that 700 Baha'is

from 169 countries have come forward to pioneer. Who has this list of 700 pioneers? They are from which location? Who is funding them? As usual, these are just mere numbers; in reality, the Baha'is are pissed off with the way they are being treated and pressurized by the administration.

There are many Baha'is who are even scared today to speak out as they are scared that they will be removed from the faith by being pronounced as covenant breakers.

The Baha'i administration is very cleverly playing with the emotions of the innocent Baha'is by showing them a very colorful portrait which has no reality. When the time comes, there is no one to stand beside the Baha'is who are persecuted or mistreated.

The UHJ is just using persecution as a tool to raise hue and cry in the United Nations but is not doing anything to actually save the Baha'is or give them refuge.

A reality check needs to be done by each and every Baha'i, and they should do thorough research of history and faith in order to understand the plotting that has happened after the death of the Master.

Regards,
Jonas S.

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 6, Edition 4

Analyzing the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l Baha

This is an extract from the above book written by Ruth White. For the complete book please click here.

Foreword

Alleged Will of ‘Abdu’l Baha discovered

Baha’i Religion Incorporated

London – On the trail of the Alleged Will

Dr. Ainsworth Mitchell’s Report

Spiritual indications that the Will is spurious

The lawsuit of the NSA

A Modern day Saint

This book contains the report of Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, the handwriting expert for the British Museum, and editor of THE ANALYST. It is the end of an exciting trail of spiritual adventures and a sequel to my book:

BAHA’I LEADS OUT OF THE LABYRINTH

RUTH WHITE
P.O.Box 1471, Beverley Hills, California 1946

“...look not upon each other with the eye of strangeness. Ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.”
“The earth is one country; and mankind is its citizens.
“... diversify of states is one of the peculiarities and concomitants of the human race.”
Baha’u’llah.

" ... the Religion which does not walk hand in hand with Science, is itself in the Darkness of Superstition and ignorance." – 'Abdu'l Baha

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III. Baha'i Religion incorporated — Acceptance of the alleged will made part of the by-laws — It has never been legally authenticated.....
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VII. The law-suit of the National Spiritual Assembly against Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Ahmad Sohrab. The suit is lost. *A violation of the Bill of* Rights — Freedom of conscience is proclaimed anew by Judge Valante.
VIII. A modern day saint Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Ahmad Sohrab spread the Baha'i cause without organization, on the nine Baha'i principles – Establish 838 Chapters of ***The Caravan*** with 100,000 members.
IX. Excerpts from the writings of 'Abdu'l Baha — Friendship – Real Fraternity — The Illuminati — Radiant Acquiescence — Gardeners — Dreams — Intercessory prayer — Faith — Prayer and Life after death.

Foreword.

The atomic bomb was prophesied by Baha'u'llah, founder of the Baha'i Religion, eighty-one years ago. At that time he also gave the remedy that would circumvent the possible destruction of our planet. This prophecy was repeated by 'Abdu'l Baha in 1912. He warned that we must speed up spiritual civilization *to* keep pace with scientific and material progress, otherwise materialism would destroy us.

This book deals with the conditions that have largely prevented their remedial teachings from becoming better appreciated— the Mal-administration of the Baha'i heritage by Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is,* who claim to derive their authority from the alleged will of 'Abdu'l Baha. In this book also is printed the analysis *of that* alleged will, *by the great* handwriting expert for the British Museum, Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell. The scientific indications are that the will of 'Abdu'l Baha is not genuine. Also, from the spiritual viewpoint, there *are* overwhelming indications that it is not genuine, as it contradicts the teachings of both Baha'u'llah and of 'Abdu'l Baha. But whether the will is genuine or spurious, the actions of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, and of Shoghi Effendi, stand as an Assembly of Baha'is, and of Shoghi Effendi, stand as an historical indictment, recorded for all time against them. Their actions show that they no more represent the Baha'i Religion than the bigots of the dark ages represented Christ's teachings.

*The two ways of spelling the word "Baha'i" used in this book is due to the fact that during 'Abdu'l Baha's lifetime the word was spelled Baha'i." But Shoghi Effendi insists on the word being spelled "Baha'i.

One of these actions is the trade marking of the name "Baha'i" in 1928. This is the same as if one sect within Christianity had tried to trade mark the name "Christian." In their application for the trade mark they described themselves as the: "National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the United States and Canada, a common-law corporation,

organized and operated under declaration of trust and doing business at. . .” This trade mark was later pronounced invalid by the court when the Assembly instituted two law-suits, during 1941, against two well-known Baha’is, to prevent them, or anyone else, from spreading the Baha’i teachings except through their organization. Of course the Assembly lost both suits and they were severely reprimanded by Judge Valente, who reminded them of the Bill of Rights, and pointed out that each one has a right to practice his religion unmolested by others.

The Assembly of Baha’is use the assets that Baha’u’llah and ‘Abdu’l Baha built up by preaching some of their principles from the platform. But in private, after a person has joined the Assembly, that person is faced with the alternative of complying with the narrow, bigoted edicts of Shoghi Effendi and the Assembly, or of being excommunicated.

This book is a challenge to them to prove, if they can. Not only whether the will of ‘Abdu’l Baha is genuine, and the authority which they claim to derive from it is legitimate, but also whether their administration of their assumed authority is in the spirit of the teachings of Baha’u’llah and ‘Abdu’l Baha.

Each one reading this book should feel a personal responsibility toward this greatest peace movement of modern times. Dr. David Starr Jordan said of one of its founders:

“‘Abdu’l Baha will unite the East and the West, for he travels the Mystic Path with practical feet”

Alleged Will of ‘Abdu’l Baha discovered

The late Professor E. G. Browne of the University of Cambridge, who was *the* best historian of the Baha’i Cause, states:

“My object in the present essay on the Babis is twofold. . . .

I wish to point out how much still remains to be done to thoroughly elucidate the matter, and to emphasize the fact that every year which passes will render it more and more difficult to fill in certain important details in the history and chronology of this sect. I sincerely hope that some, who have the means and opportunity of assisting in this task, may be induced to do so while it is still possible; . . . Believing as I do that Babism* is destined to leave a permanent mark in the world, I feel very strongly how desirable it is that this work should be accomplished.....”
(*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 1889; page 485)*

** “Babism” is now known as ‘Baha’ism” or the “Baha’i Cause” which derives its name from Baha’u’llah. “The Bab” meant; ”The Gate.” He heralded the coming Messiah, Baha’u’llah.*

It is equally important to chronicle the history of the Baha’i Cause as it has come under my observation from the time that ‘Abdu’l Baha passed from this world, in November 1921, up to the present writing, 1945.

The earlier chronicles of the Baha’i Revelation dealt with the physical martyrdom of the Babis. This present history deals with the spiritual martyrdom which the Baha’i Revelation has suffered, since ‘Abdu’l Baha passed from this world. For in the hands of Shoghi Effendi, and The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of the United States and Canada, the great universal Baha’i Cause has been changed into a narrow bigoted sect and many of the tactics of the dark ages have been revived. This is what has

happened to the religion that many leading thinkers of the day believe is the remedy for this age.

I have already published in 1929 some history of this matter in my book, "The Baha'i Religion and Its Enemy the Baha'i Organization." In this book is printed the complete set of nine photographs of the alleged will of 'Abdu'l Baha written in Persian together with the English translation of it consisting of thirty-one pages." *

But since the publication of this book such appalling conditions have taken place, under the administration of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, that I feel it necessary to write again upon this matter, and recount the calamitous results of those happenings.

Three months after Abdul Baha passed from this world, November 26th, 1921, the following cable was sent to this country to Roy C. Wilhelm of 104 Wall Street, New York City:

'Copies of this book may be purchased from the author, Mrs. Ruth White, P. O. Box 1471, Beverly Hills, Calif.

"Wilhemite, N. Y.
In Will Shoghi Effendi appointed Guardian of the Cause and Head of House of Justice.
(Signed) Greatest Holy Leaf, Haifa."

The "Greatest Holy Leaf is the sister of 'Abdu'l Baha. The appointment of a successor came as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky to everyone. For 'Abdu'l Baha gave no hint that this was his intention. On the contrary he spoke many times against such a possibility.

A typewritten English translation of the alleged will arrived in New York four weeks later. This document, undated and un-witnessed, was read by Mr. Horace Holley to a gathering of Baha'is at which I was present. No details concerning it and no comments upon it were vouchsafed. Later we heard that it had been buried in the ground, but who found it, and when, and where, has never been revealed so far as I know.

As I listened to Mr. Holley's reading, my inner admonitor kept up a running comment: **"Why had 'Abdu'l Baha appointed Shoghi Effendi as Guardian when everything he said and wrote indicated that he did not mean to appoint any successor?"** And as Mr. Holley continued: "... a fixed money offering ... is to be offered through the Guardian of the Cause of God . . .," I thought **"This endows Shoghi with more potential power and wealth than a king and pope combined."**

Then Mr. Holley continued, "The Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Baha and in no wise accept any excuses from him. . . ."

Again my inner admonitor reasoned: "That is what is known in law as the "terror clause," in case a will is disputed. It will prevent those who can be easily frightened from investigating, or from even asking questions concerning the will."

After Mr. Holley had finished reading the document those present filed out of the room shocked into silence.

I kept my thoughts to myself and decided to re-read everything that both Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha had said and written, and find out if I had missed something in my previous readings which would indicate their intention of appointing a hereditary line of successors or guardians.

My husband and I had the privilege of knowing 'Abdu'l Baha for the last ten years of his life, and we spent over a hundred days in his presence, forty-nine of which were spent at his home in Haifa, Palestine, during two visits there. I had read and re-read all of his published writings as well as hundreds of unpublished Tablets and notes and I now went through the long list again. After months of research I found that neither he nor Baha'u'llah had given the slightest intimation that they intended to appoint a hereditary guardianship. In fact everything that they had said or spoken indicated the opposite intention.

I also did a great deal of recollecting of events that had happened during our two visits to the home of 'Abdu'l Baha, where I had an opportunity to see him in relation Baha, where I had an opportunity to see him in relation to his family and his "in-laws." The deductions that I made confirmed what 'Abdu'l Baha had so often said — that the spiritual relationship was the real kinship, and not the physical. For his family, with the exception of his wife and sister, were the average types with a strong bent toward organized religion, whereas 'Abdu'l Baha was universal, "super-racial and undogmatic." The world was his family. His loving care for his universal family was evident throughout his life, but at no time was it more evident than during the First World War and directly after it. He personally supervised vast agricultural projects at Tiberius and Adassieh, and he rationed and distributed the products that he cultivated, thereby saving thousands from starvation. For this service *and* for his help in frequently bringing peace between warring factions in the Holy Land he was knighted by the British Government in April, 1920, at which ceremony we were present.

I also wish to give a few high-lights on Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of 'Abdu'l Baha, who is now his alleged successor. He had failed in his college course at the age of twenty-four, and he wished to go to Oxford University, in the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of 'Abdu'l Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with 'Abdu'l Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life, than any amount of academic training could possibly be.

For these last two years were filled with intense activities, and spiritual confirmations, as it was just after the first world war, and the war had made people hungry for spiritual enlightenment. As a result there flocked to the home of 'Abdu'l Baha a steady stream of pilgrims from all over the earth — the poor, the wealthy, the distinguished, and also frightened refugees. They came by camel, train, auto, boat, and on foot to imbibe the spiritual wisdom of 'Abdu'l Baha, and each day there dined at his table about forty pilgrims. This personal contact which we were privileged to have was of tremendous importance, not only because of what he said, but because of the emanation of his spirit, which transported those who were receptive into kingdoms of enlightenment and happiness. **Yet, Shoghi Effendi chose to be away during the last two years of 'Abdu'l Baha's life, and did not return for a full month after he had passed from this world.**

Another significant fact to which I wish to call attention is this: If 'Abdu'l Baha had had any secret intention of appointing Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Baha'i Cause, it does not seem plausible that he would have excluded him from the entourage that accompanied him on his trip through Europe and America during 1912. Shoghi Effendi at that time was eighteen years of age and spoke and wrote English, Persian and Arabic; yet he was not included in this trip. Even after 'Abdu'l Baha returned to Palestine, instead of choosing Shoghi Effendi as his secretary, he chose Ahmad Sohrab, who had accompanied him to Europe and America, and who continued as his secretary for five succeeding years.

It is important for those who are interested in *the* Baha'i Religion to free themselves from the idea that the family of 'Abdu'l Baha is a "Holy Family." In fact his family, and "in-laws," with the exception of his wife and sister, were somewhat materialistic, and viewed the religion more or less as a little family affair with a strong bent toward organization. For years they have indoctrinated, more or less, the pilgrims who visited the home of 'Abdu'l Baha, myself included, with this conception of religion. This partly nullified the great universal teachings. The result was that when 'Abdu'l Baha passed from this world in November, 1921. Some of his family, who had laid the ground-work for organization through these pilgrims while he was alive, hastened to establish it more firmly when he died. All this resulted in making the Baha'i Movement, under the dictatorship of Shoghi Effendi, an organization which for narrowness and bigotry has no parallel in history except in the dark ages.

Remembering these things, together with my months of research, convinced me that neither Baha'u'llah nor 'Abdu'l Baha had at any time advocated an 'organization' of Baha'is, far less an official organization headed by a Guardian who collected 'dues' and had the power of excommunication. Among hundreds of quotations that could be given on this subject to show that they had no intention of such an organization the following will suffice:

"The Blessed Perfection" * has uptorn the root of the free of superstition and religious officers. In the past the ambitious leaders of religions have been the cause of the retrogression and ignorance of a nation. In this Cause there are no religious titles, no ceremonies of ordination. One is not respected simply because he wears a peculiar dress or carries a religious title, or has inherited it from the Fathers. No! These are not the marks of distinction. On the other hand, those sanctified souls, the signs of their divine sanctity and spirituality become apparent in the hearts of others. People are unconsciously attracted to them through their pure morality, their justice sacerdotal and theological position makes a clergyman proud and haughty. But there is one thing in this Cause: some people may become greater than the rest, not through appointment, but through the purity of their hearts, their unselfish deeds, their heroic sacrifices, and their knowledge of God. Such illumined souls, like kind fathers or teachers, will guide and teach those less fortunate. They are the elder brothers of the members of the community. They do not arrogate to themselves any title or position. You will know them by their humility, their sincerity, their deeds, their severance, their knowledge, their spirituality, and their attraction."

Diary of Ahmad Sohrab, March 21, 1913.

**Baha'u'llah – Spoken by 'Abdu'l Baha at a Persian meeting and recorded by Mir Ahmad Sohrab, July 19, 1913.*

"A gentleman who had spent many years in India asked by what means and what kind of organization 'Abdu'l Baha intended to spread his teachings. The answer was: 'Our organization is the love of God, the knowledge of the Almighty, the descent of the breaths of the Holy Spirit, the outflow of the spiritual life; our capital is good deeds, merciful attributes, heavenly characteristics, and divine ethics.' "
Diary of Ahmad Sohrab, December 30, 1912.

"Holding to the letter of the law is many times an indication of a desire for leadership. One who assumes to be the enforcer of the law shows an intellectual understanding of the Cause, but that spiritual guidance in him is not yet established.

The alphabet of things is for children, that they may in time use their reasoning powers. 'Following the spirit' is guidance by and through the heart the prompter of the spirit. The Pharisees were extremely orthodox, holding strictly to the law. They were the cause of the condemnation and ultimate crucifixion of Jesus."

* * *

"Were not the Revelation of Baha'u'llah one adaptable to the entire world and its diverse nations, itcould not be a unique and universal Revelation, but its elasticity adapts itself to all conditions, and its spirit is one that moulds itself into every vehicle and need for the accomplishment of the divine plan of unity.

But when some follow merely the hard and fixed letter of the law, they deprive it (the Revelation) of its elastic quality — the spirit — and endeavour to convert it into a hard instrument of inflexible qualities."
Star of the West, June 24, 1915; pages 43, 44, 45.

"O friends! It is the wish of 'Abdu'l Baha, that the *friends* may establish general *unity, and not a* particular meeting of unity. You must have great consideration for this fact, for during past cycles such events were, in the beginning, a means of harmony, they became in the end the cause of trouble."
Tablets Containing Instructions; 1906.

". . . It is not necessary even to label one's self. One may call one's self a Baha'i and in no way live the life; on the other hand one may live the life and never be known *as* a Baha'i. It is not so much by what name you are called, but what you are in your heart. Are you loving and serving God? Love and service are the greatest requisites of a good life. Endeavor in every possible way to do some favour, some service for someone else; do this daily, no matter how small or trivial the act of kindness may be. Even a smile counts for much."
From Table Talks of 'Abdu'l Baha; 1906.

"If we are true Baha'is, speech is not needed. Our actions will help on the world, will spread civilization, will help the progress of science, and cause the arts to develop. Without action, nothing in the material world can be accomplished; neither can words unaided advance a man in the Spiritual Kingdom. It is not through lip service only, which the Elect of God have attained to holiness, but by patient lives of active service they have brought Light into the World.

<u>Baha'i Religion Incorporated</u>

From the beginning of my contact with 'Abdu'l Baha I observed a definite cleavage between the universality that he was trying to establish, and a strong tendency on the part of most of his followers toward organization, and I evaded all attempts to be drawn into it. Although I was a "recognized Baha'i" I never belonged to the "Spiritual

Assemblies." During my first visit to the home of 'Abdu'l Baha, in May, 1920, I decided to ask him if my stand was right. So one morning, when my husband and I were taking early morning tea with him, we found him engulfed in great floods of correspondence, and contrary to his usual custom of praising people he spoke of the dreadful lack of harmony existing among the members of the Baha'i Assemblies in America, and the letters of complaint that they wrote to him one against the other.

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "Can't they understand that I have nothing to do with such pettiness?"

The thought occurred to me, "Why is he telling me this? I have never belonged to the Assemblies." I concluded that this was an opportune time to ask him if my stand in not becoming a member of them was the right one. His face beamed with happiness as he nodded approval and said:

"The organization that the Baha'is have among themselves has nothing to do with the teachings of Baha'u'llah. The teachings of Baha'u'llah are universal and cannot be confined to a sect."

These same people who were the leaders in the organization then are the leaders in it today. During the lifetime of 'Abdu'l Baha the following utterance of his was widely circulated in a blue pamphlet, 9:

"The Baha'i Religion is not an organization. You can never organize the Baha'i Cause. The Baha'i Religion is the Spirit of this age. It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Baha'i Cause is an inclusive movement; the teachings of all the religions and societies are found here; the Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, etc., find their highest aims in this Cause. Even the Socialists and Philosophers find their theories fully developed in this Movement."

My months of research were in accordance with one of the most important points of the Baha'i Religion — Independent investigation of truth, as the following by 'Abdu'l Baha will make plain:

". . . . **know ye that God has created in man the power of reason whereby man is enabled to investigate reality ... He has endowed him with mind or the faculty of reasoning by the exercise of which he is to investigate and discover the truth; and that which he finds real and true, he must accept. He must not be an imitator or blind follower of any soul. He must not rely implicitly upon the opinion of any man without investigation; nay, each soul must seek intelligently, and independently, arriving at a real conclusion and bound only by that reality. The greatest cause of bereavement and disheartening in the world of humanity is ignorance, based upon blind imitation. It is due to this that wars and battles prevail; from this cause hatred and animosity arise continually among mankind. . . ."**

"God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigations of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain. Each human creature has individual endowment, power and responsibility in the creative plan of God. Therefore depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation;

otherwise you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God. Turn to God; supplicate humbly at his threshold, seeking assistance and confirmation, that God may rend asunder the veils that obscure your vision. Then will your eyes be filled with illumination; face to face you will behold the reality of God and your heart become completely purified from and your heart become completely purified from the dross of ignorance, reflecting the glories and bounties of the kingdom.

". . . It is the duty of everyone to investigate reality, and investigation of reality by another will not do. . ."

The Promulgation of Universal Truth.
Discourses by 'Abdu'l Baha; pages 285-287-288.

Not until three years had elapsed after the alleged will had been read in 1922, were copies of it finally distributed, and then only to "old and recognized believers." I was among those who received a copy. But my stand continued to be one of "watchful waiting." This stand on my part caused me no embarrassment, inasmuch as I had never been a member of the Baha'i organization, {Spiritual Assembles of- the Baha'is}. I knew that belonging to them meant conforming to the group repression and being shorn of the universal attitude which 'Abdu'l Baha said is the essence of the Baha'i Cause. During these three years, however, my outer as well as my inner life was absorbed with the question of 'Abdu'l Baha's alleged will.

In May 1926 the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is incorporated the Baha'i Cause, made the alleged will part of the by-laws, and proclaimed it an article of faith that Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Baha'i Cause must be obeyed in all things. The alleged will had never been examined by handwriting experts.

By the powers granted in the alleged will, the Guardian collected large sums of money, and sent out various pleas for this purpose. I made four contributions during 1925 and 1926, in answer to one of these pleas which was printed on the Baha'i Fund receipt and was as follows:

"*It is the sacred obligation of every conscientious servant of Baha'u'llah, who desires to see His Cause advance, to contribute freely and generously for the increase of that Fund.*" — Shoghi Effendi.

One division of this BAHA! FUND was to be used in response to Shoghi's plea that more money was needed at once to buy land around the Tomb of the Bab on Mount Carmel, in order to protect this shrine from the encroachment of other people who were also buying land there. In answer to this plea I sent *$200* for the Mount Carmel division of the Baha'i Fund. Later I wrote to Shoghi Effendi, and also to the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, asking how much land had been purchased, and the number and size of the lots, and where they were situated. But the only information I could get was that my contribution had been pooled with contributions of others. Who these 'others' were I could not find out. Nor was any other information given me for which I had asked.

Now I will jump ahead to 1944 and show that Shoghi Effendi and The National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is have, for the last twenty-one years, continued to disregard the question of accounting for money received. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab in his book published in 1944* writes that the Baha'i Movement, under Shoghi Effendi is now an organization, and he makes the following statement:

"The movement is an organization run by an administrative body along the lines of laws and by-laws; and to be consistent with this new aspect, the financial department should be regulated according to institutionalized custom. ... He (Shoghi Effendi! as treasurer, should see to

it that a certified accountant give to the members of his community a detailed report on this fund to which they have subscribed... This has not been done up to date, although twenty-one years have elapsed since the departure of the Master ('Abdu'l Baha)..."

** The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l Baha, page 67*
New History Foundation, 132 East 65th Street, New York, N. Y.

Now to return to my own experience in 1926. I knew that in as much as I had made contributions to the BAHA'I FUND, in answer to Shoghi Effendi's plea, and could get no financial statement from him or the Assembly, that I had a legal right to demand a photographic copy of the alleged will. I therefore wrote to the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is part of which letter is as follows:

"I request that you, in your official capacity as one of the officers of this organization, present to me legal evidence that your organization, in its acceptance of Shoghi Effendi as the successor of 'Abdu'l Baha, is founded on a legal claim, by presenting to me, on or before the 19th day of January, 1928, an authentic photographic copy of this document which purports to be the will of 'Abdu'l Baha.
Yours in the service of the Cause of God,
Ruth White

Four weeks later, on December 31, I received a reply from Mr. Holley, part of which is as follows:

National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada
Office of the Secretary
129 East Tenth Street, New York City
December 31, 1927.

My Dear Mrs. White:

Although you have indicated several points on which you desire explanation or comment, we feel that your letter raises only one fundamental question, namely, the validity of the Will and Testament of 'Abdul-Baha. Since this will appoints a Guardian to administer the administrative affairs of the Cause, and since the Guardian has approved the matters you question, it of course follows that those who really desire to conform to the wishes and instructions of 'Abdul-Baha will accept His instructions concerning administrative affairs as soon as they know what these instructions are.

We can, therefore, give you full assurance that the Will and Testament of 'Abdul-Baha, a copy of which was sent you over two years ago, is a document written by Him in His own hand, the validity of which has been established by a number of well-known Baha'is from different countries who inspected the original at Haifa.

Apart from this entirely convincing proof, it is a matter of interesting historical record that, when the custody of one of the Baha'i tombs at- Haifa was questioned after the departure of 'Abdul-Baha the final decision lay in the hands of the representative of the British Government administering Palestine under the mandate of the League of Nations, and after full investigation he restored the keys of the Tomb to the Guardian appointed in the Will and Testament of 'Abdul-Baha.

As no photographic copies of this document exist in this country, we are unable to meet your request for such a copy. In view of the fact that the world-wide Baha'i community naturally most concerned with establishing the completeness and accuracy of 'Abdul-Baha's final instruction to His followers, has been satisfied with the verbal accuracy of His Will and Testament; and in view also of the fact that the highest civil authorities of Palestine have also accepted the Guardian as the administrative head of the Baha'i Cause, we know that you may rest assured that- obedience to 'Abdul-Baha at this time means obedience to the Guardian appointed by Him in all matters pertaining to the Baha'i Cause."

(Signed)

HORACE HOLLEY,
Secretary.

This answer was wholly unsatisfactory, for the very point of my letter, as well as others that I had previously sent, was that the alleged will is not in accord with the wishes or teachings which 'Abdu'l Baha expressed during his lifetime. Furthermore Mr., Holley's so-called proof of the validity of the will, that it is "a document written by him ('Abdu'l Baha) in his own hand, the validity of which has been established by a number of well-known Baha'is from different countries who inspected the original at Haifa" would be thrown out of any court as worthless. For the "well-known Baha'is" were not handwriting experts, and no one but a handwriting expert is legally qualified to judge the validity of a questioned will. Another reason why the evidence of these "well-known *Baha'is"* is worthless is that they are not disinterested witnesses. They are leaders in the very organization in the by-laws of which this alleged will was incorporated, and they had made it an article of faith that this will must and they had made it an article of faith that this will must be accepted. Those who even questioned it were to be thrown out of the congregation of the Baha'is.

As for Mr. Holley's statement: "... in view also of the fact that the highest civil authorities of Palestine have also accepted the Guardian as the administrative head of the Baha'i Cause . . ." it means nothing at all as far as the vital issue is concerned. For there was no property, either personal or real, bequeathed in the alleged will and as no one 'contested the right of Shoghi Effendi as successor to the point of insisting upon having the alleged will put to the acid test of handwriting experts, the government's recognition of him consisted in permitting him to be the custodian of the Tombs of the Bab and of Baha'u'llah. This would have been conceded him even without a will, as he is the oldest male descendant of 'Abdu'l Baha.

As Mr. Mountford Mills was one of the "well known Baha'is" who had gone to Palestine shortly after the passing of 'Abdu'l Baha, I wrote to him asking him to give me what information he could concerning the alleged will. Mr. Mills, by the way, drew up the by-laws of the Baha'i Cause, than which nothing could be more un-Baha'i. Although he is an exceptionally fine man, that did not interfere with his blindness. Just after he had drawn these by-laws, my husband and I had an interview with him, in which he said that he had recently finished reading 'Christianity Past and Present' by Charles Guignebert, and that if he had read it before drafting those by-laws the history of the Baha'i Cause would have been different. In other words Mr. Mills deeply regretted his action.

The following is his reply to my letter:

January 19th, 1928.

Dear Mrs. White:

I have your letter of yesterday and have also received the copies of your earlier letters to the National Spiritual Assembly and to Mr. Holley, all bearing upon the question whether the Will accepted by the National

Spiritual Assembly as Abdul' Baha's Last Testament is really so. Needless to say, I am glad to give you any information I can relating to the matter.

Answering more specifically the questions in your letter to me, I have seen the Will.
It is written entirely in the Master's own hand.
It is signed by him.
Its parts written before the Master's seal was stolen from him in this country are sealed.
It is not dated, but its approximate date appears from its contents.
It has not been probated in the sense that we use the word, as there is no provision under the laws of Islam for such a proceeding. It has, however, been officially recognized by the British Government, the MandatoryPower now governing Palestine.

I hope these answers will satisfy the doubts that have arisen in your mind concerning the authenticity of the Will. Please let me know. I have enjoyed exceptional opportunities to learn the facts about it and do not hesitate to assure you that the document of which copies have been circulated among the Baha'is in this country is the Last Will and Testament of Abdul Baha and embodies his final and most sacred message to his followers.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed)
MOUNTFORD MILLS.

Then, upon further questioning he wrote again as follows:

January 22nd, 1928.

Dear Mrs. White:

I have your letter of yesterday.

As I wrote in my last letter, the formal standards in executing wills here required by our laws cannot be applied to the Will of 'Abdu'l Baha. Viewing it- through the eye of our custom so far as possible, however, we should consider its three parts as forming his main Will to which two codicils had been added, all three parts being his Last Will and Testament. This is the view I took when writing you. It also seems beyond question that this was the Master's own intention. The three parts *were* filed together in one place by him, with the evident intent that they should be read together as one document.

Answering your specific questions.

All three sections are signed by 'Abdu'l Baha.
The first two sections are sealed.
All three sections are in the handwriting of 'Abdu'l Baha.
The Master's seal was stolen during his visit to this country in 1912.
The first- two sections were thus obviously written before 1912, the last section after his return to Palestine in 1913. A closer approximation to the exact dates can be drawn from events referred to in the separate sections, but I have not this data with me here. As explained above, following our occidental terminology, there is but one Will with two codicils, the three parts having been written at different dates.

The commands of 'Abdu'l Baha which you quote concerning the identification of letters alleged to have been written by him were given out with special reference to Orientals who might come to this country and

mingle with the Friends with the purpose of creating differences among them, and it has always been supposed that the commands were given with particular reference to Dr. _____, who, as you know, did come here shortly afterwards. That these instructions could not have been intended to apply in full detail to all of the Master's writings is clearly shown by the innumerable Tablets sent to us that were almost never written in his own hand beyond the signature. However, I agree with you entirely that he would wish even more strongly that anyone feeling that he had reasonable grounds to doubt the authenticity of so gravely important a document as his Will should take every reasonable precaution to be sure.

Sincerely,
(Signed)
MOUNTFORD MILLS.

Here again in both letters Mr. Mills' statements: "It is written entirely in the Master's own hand," and . . . "All three sections are in the handwriting of 'Abdu'l Baha" are no proof at all, as only a handwriting expert is legally qualified to judge the authenticity of the handwriting of a questioned will.

In response to other letters that I wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly, reiterating my request for photographs of the alleged will in order to have it examined by handwriting experts, I received a reply from Mr. Holley asking me to meet the members of the Spiritual Assembly. I accepted this invitation and met them on February 25, 1928. The object of the meeting on their part was, apparently, to try and make me feel that I should accept this document on verbal and circumstantial evidence. I, on my part, reiterated what I had written in my letters and tried to make them realize that to accept it in this manner was disobedience to the commands of 'Abdu'l Baha.

I asked them how they could possibly believe they were carrying out the wishes of 'Abdu'l Baha in accepting this alleged will before they had first carried out his wishes regarding the acceptance *of* any document alleged to be his. I reminded them that he had written:

"Any Persian . . . (who comes to America), even if it is Shoghi Effendi, or Rouhi Effendi (the two grandsons of 'Abdu'l Baha) the friends must demand of him before anything else, his credential letter, written in my handwriting, or signed with my signature."

(Signed)
'Abdu'l Baha Abbas.

From Star of the West, October 16, 1915.

They contended that this referred to a certain relative of 'Abdu'l Baha's. I maintained that it referred to anyone, and that it made no difference whether a letter or document – alleged to be 'Abdu'l Baha's was brought or sent to us. He would insist that we should see his own writing or signature before we accepted it. In particular this would

London—on the trail of the Alleged Will

Although everyone whom I had questioned concerning the alleged will of 'Abdu'l Baha had assured me that it had never been photographed, yet about this time I heard that one set of photographs did exist and was owned by a Persian in London.

In order to insure having photo static copies made from these in case the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is failed to secure the photographs they had sent for. Or

would not permit me to photograph them in case they came, I sailed with my husband for England on April 25, 1928.

I believed I could secure copies of the set through the help of a prominent Baha'i in London, Mrs. Claudia Coles, because I had rendered her a great service in 1926, through foreknowledge of an event that vitally concerned her welfare. The whole story is so extraordinary that I wish I could recount it here, for it demonstrates that those who follow guidance must be willing to follow it for others also, no matter how much work it entailed and how much time and money spent. Lawrence and I had made our trip to London in 1926 solely to help her.

In this particular case the Higher Powers had acted on me in the same way that a novelist acts when, as he plots his novel, he "plants" ahead of time hints of future events. Many times I have been moved in this way to do inexplicable things, the wisdom of which only became known to me later. Happy are we if we can catch *a* glimpse of the plot of our lives and align ourselves with it.

The events of 1926 gave Mrs. Coles such confidence in me that now, when I suddenly appeared two years later and asked her to secure for me the photographs of the will of 'Abdu'l Baha, she gladly consented.

The very day after our arrival the photographs were *in our* hands *and together* we went to the British Museum and had them Photostatted. Some of the ten sheets were *illegible in part,* as evidently something had been spilled over the photographs from which they had been *reproduced,* or perhaps the plates had been over-exposed. But, needless to say, I was overjoyed at the truly miraculous way in which we had gained possession of them.

After meeting practically all the Baha'is in London and many of those in Germany, we returned to America with the much-coveted document, arriving in New York on May 29th, 1928. On that very day Mr. Holley wrote to me that the photographs of the will were at his office and invited me to inspect them. But I assured him that an inspection at his office would not suffice. Three days later, on June 1st, he wrote to me again and his attitude is typical of that of all the Baha'is in the organization toward the alleged will. He thought that by looking at it, and then looking at the writing, which might or might not be that of 'Abdu'l Baha. I could judge whether the writing of the will is genuine. They surely must have known that only an expert could determine this after much work with the comparative microscope used by handwriting experts. The following is part of his letter:

My dear Mrs. White: **June 1, 1928.**

At the time when the National Assembly recorded in its minutes a reference to your joint meeting with us, and our decision to request photographs or Photostats of the Will and Testament, it was not contemplated that you would require more than a careful inspection of these copies of the original papers at my office. The members felt sure that by comparing the signature and handwriting with copies of original tablets which might be in your possession, you could readily satisfy yourself that the Will and Testament is absolutely genuine.

If I had not surprised him with the information that I had just returned from London with photo static copies of the alleged will, I believe that an inspection at his office is all that would have been granted me. When I asked permission to have his set photo stated as some of the sheets of those I had were partly obliterated, he said he would bring the matter up before the members of the National Spiritual Assembly.

While awaiting their decision I wrote them another letter on June 26th, 1928, saying that it would greatly assist me if they would send me three or four photographs of tablets of 'Abdu'l Baha, written in his own hand, in order that these might be compared with the alleged will. Although I sent this by registered mail and the return card came back with Mr. Holley's signature, yet when he mailed the photo stats to me on July 13th no mention was made of my request This despite the fact that there were in the Baha'i archives in New York, as early as 1907, five hundred tablets of 'Abdu'l Baha.*

*"*See Tablets of 'Abdu'l Baha, Vol. I. Introduction.*

In fact the National Spiritual Assembly by refusing to have the original text of the will examined themselves and by their obvious reluctance to assist me in my efforts to have it done, appeared to be unwilling to put the alleged will to the test of handwriting analysis for fear that it might be proved invalid.

My next step was to secure the services of the greatest handwriting expert I could obtain, one whose integrity was above reproach. I finally went to Mr. Albert S. Osborne but for a number of reasons he could not undertake the task. Yet he was greatly interested, very kind, and gave me valuable advice. He said that the document should be examined from three different angles. First, from the spiritual point of view. Does the alleged will agree with the teachings and the intent that the maker held during his lifetime, or does it contradict them? Secondly, from the literary point of view. Is it written in the style of 'Abdu'l Baha? Thirdly, from the scientific point of view — submit it to the scrutiny of the best handwriting experts. As he lived in Montclair, New Jersey. Mr. Osborne kindly procured for me a photograph of the inscription written by 'Abdu'l Baha on May 12, 1912, in the Bible in the Unitarian Church in that city.

Mr. Osborne emphasized the value of having the original document of the will examined. As this was in the Holy Land he suggested that I take the matter up with the British Analyst in Palestine. But on inquiry I was told there was none there. I therefore wrote to the High Commissioner of Palestine on December 31st. 1928.

I assumed that, inasmuch as the alleged will was an affair of international interest and inasmuch as it had been incorporated, without legal proof of its authenticity, in the bylaws of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, and had thereby empowered Shoghi Effendi to collect large sums of money, the High Commissioner might undertake the examination of the document. I felt also that his verdict would carry much more weight than if I personally undertook the work, even if I had had the means to do so.

The following is the reply to my letter:

Secretarial. Government offices, Jerusalem,
6th February, 1929.

Madam,

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 31st December regarding the Will of Sir 'Abdu'l Baha Abbas and to inform you that any information which you wish to obtain must be obtained privately and that if you wish to take any steps to examine the Will you would be well advised to employ an advocate in Palestine.

The money order which accompanied your letter is returned herewith.
I am, Madam,

Your obedient servant,
(Signed)

E. Mus,
For Chief Secretary.
Mrs. H. Lawrence
White New York City, U. S. A.

This letter from the High Commissioner was such a disappointment that I decided to publish the result of my long and careful study of the material bearing on what Mr. Osborne called 'spiritual proof: does the alleged will agree with or contradict the expressed intent of the alleged maker?

In the autumn of 1929 I published the book to which I have already referred, "The Baha'i Religion and its Enemy, the Baha'i Organization." This was followed in 1930 by an appendix in which I definitely challenged the authenticity of the will.

For between the publication of this book and the appendix I sailed for England in order to engage the services of the very best handwriting expert in England, Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell. I felt he was especially qualified as he is the official expert on documents in the British Museum and the editor of THE ANALYST. Equally important was the fact that he is a man above reproach.

I submitted to him specimens of the handwriting of 'Abdu'l Baha together with Photostat copies of the alleged will. The authentic specimens that I submitted are as follows:

1. A photographic copy of the inscription which 'Abdu'l Baha wrote in the Bible of the Unitarian Church at Montclair N. J. in 1912. This was secured for me by Albert S. Osborn and on the upper left margin of the photograph was typed: "Authentic writing of 'Abdu'l Baha written in the book of the Unitarian Church, at Montclair, N.J., U.S.A. 1912"

2. Writing from the Guest Bible for 1912, City Temple, London. This Photostat copy was made by Donald Macbeth of the Manuscript Division of the British Museum.

3. Authentic signatures on two letters written to Mrs. J. Stannard and a signature on a very old letter written to Mrs. Devine.

The three photographs herewith reproduced are:

1. Section of the alleged will of 'Abdu'l Baha.

2. Facsimile reproduction of the authentic writing of 'Abdu'l Baha written in the Bible of the Unitarian Church, Montclair, New Jersey in 1912.

3. Facsimile reproduction of the writing of 'Abdu'l Baha written in the Guest Bible of the City Temple, London, in 1912:

Two of these specimens herewith reproduced are authentic writings of 'Abdu'l Baha beyond a doubt. The one from the Guest Bible of the City Temple, London, agrees with the writing in the Bible of the Unitarian Church at Montclair, New Jersey. Three men witnessed 'Abdu'l Baha write with his own hand the inscription in the Bible of the City Temple. They are: John Kelman, Oliver Lodge, and Edwin Brough. Donald Macbeth, of the manuscript department of the British Museum, who photographed it, signed on the

back of the photograph to that effect. The following is the translation of this inscription that Abdul! Baha wrote in the Bible of the City Temple, in 1913:

This book is the Holy Book of God, Celestial Inspiration; it is the Bible of Salvation, the noble Gospel. It is the mystery of the Kingdom and its Lights. It is the Divine Bounty, the sign of the Guidance of God.
(Signed)
"Abdu'l Baha' 'Abbas

This English translation appears side by side with the Persian writing of 'Abdu'l Baha.

The following is a translation of the inscription that 'Abdu'l Baha wrote in the Bible of the Unitarian Church at Montclair, New Jersey, May 12, 1912, on which occasion he spoke at that church:

"O Almighty! O Pure God! Thanks be unto Thee that the mountain and desert were traversed, the all surrounding ocean was crossed until we arrived on this continent and now in this country have we loosed our tongue in Thy name and Mention, and in this church like unto Elias have we heralded Thy Kingdom.

O God! Attract the members of this church to Thy Beauty, protect and guard them under Thy Shelter and bless them!
(Signed)
'Abdu'l Baha Abbas.

The third specimen of handwriting reproduced here is from the alleged will of 'Abdu'l Baha. A comparison of this enlarged writing with the enlarged writing of the two authentic writings of 'Abdu'l Baha makes differences perfectly apparent that would not be so apparent without enlargement.

There can be no doubt about the authenticity of this signature to Mrs. Devine's letter, or of the two signatures in letters to Mrs. Stannard. Dr. Mitchell said that these two undoubted specimens of Abdul 8aha's writing and the specimen from the Unitarian Church in Montclair, and also that from the City Temple in London, all agree together as the writing of the same person.

After months of analytical work on the handwriting of the alleged will, comparing it with the three undoubted specimens of 'Abdu'l Baha's writing, Dr. Mitchell says that specimens of 'Abdu'l Baha's writing, Dr, Mitchell says that the writing in the alleged will is not all in the same hand. Furthermore none of ft is in the same handwriting as the specimens submitted. The following chapter is devoted to Dr. Mitchell's report.

Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell's Report

C. Ainsworth Mitchell, D.Sc. F.I.C.
Tel Victoria 8363.
85. Eccleston Square
London, S.W.I.
June 3rd 1930

REPORT

ON THE WRITING SHOWN ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ALLEGED WILL OF
'ABDU'L BAHA.

I have made a minute examination of the writing in the photographs and photographic enlargements of the alleged will of 'Abdu'l Baha, and have compared it with the authenticated writing of 'Abdu'l Baha in a series of photographs and photographic enlargements received from Mrs. H. Lawrence White.

In the absence of an opportunity to examine the original document, any conclusions to be drawn from an examination of the photographic enlargements must necessarily be of a provisional character contingent upon the accuracy of the photographic records. Moreover, some of the facts which are taken into consideration in the scientific examination of an original document cannot be perfectly studied in a photographic reproduction, such as, for example, the ink, paper, pen strokes, and so on.

Assuming that the authenticated specimens of writing are of approximately the same period as that at which the disputed will is alleged to have been written and signed, the points which can be accurately compared in the photographic enlargements are the mode of formation of the writing, the changes in pressure, the form of individual letters, and the relationship in the size of parts of the letter to the whole.

A fact requiring explanation is the presence of apparent erasures on some of the pages of the will, namely in lines 12 and 13 of page 2, and line 13 of page 4. Without a microscopical examination of the original document it is not possible to state whether a chemical agent has been used, but assuming there have been erasures at these points I think it probable that they were done mechanically, not chemically. The apparent erasure on page 5, line 11, may possibly be the result of an imprint from other written matter while the ink was wet.

The photographic reproductions of authenticated specimens of the writing of 'Abdu'l Baha were the following:—

1. Writing from the Book of the Unitarian Church, Montclair, New Jersey.
2. Writing from the Guest Bible for 1912, City Temple, London.
3. Authenticated signatures on two letters to Mrs. Stannard on a photograph, and a possibly authentic signature in the possession of Mrs. Devine.

There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the signature from Mrs. Devine, since it agrees closely with the other signatures.

<u>The Signatures on the Envelope</u>: –
A comparison of the four signatures on the envelope of the alleged will with the four authenticated signatures reveals many striking differences in the mode of formation of the characters, as for example:

In the authentic signatures the width of these characters, compared with their height, is much greater than in the signatures on the envelope. The strokes are also much firmer in the envelope signatures than in the authenticated signatures.

In the authenticated signature, the entire character is roughly 2 ¼ times the width of the open space between the uprights; in the disputed signatures the corresponding figure is twice as great. In the authentic signatures the cusp is rounded; in the disputed signatures it is pointed. In the authenticated signatures the relationship between the

depth of the gap and its breadth is as 1: 1.4 to 1.6. Whereas in the disputed signatures it is as 1: 2.3 to 2.6. Thus the ratio is totally different. In my opinion these differences are not consistent with the signatures upon the envelope being in the writing of the writer of the authenticated signature.

The Body of the Will:-
A comparison of the formation of the writing on the envelope with that on pages 9 and 10 of the will shows so many points of resemblance that there is no reason to doubt that they were written by the same person.

I have also studied minutely the photographic enlargements of the writing on the other pages of the will, and have formed the following conclusions:—

Page 2, with the exception of the last two lines, agrees with Page 3.

The last two lines of Page 2 agree with Page 4.

The other pages, namely 5, 6, 7 and 8, agree in the characteristics of writing with the writing on Page 4. That is to say, the writing does not agree with the hypothesis that it was all written by one person.

The writing of 'Abdu'l Baha has certain distinctive features, among which are a sudden change of pressure in some of the strokes, wavering formation of some of the curves, and the formation of sharp angles in some of the characters. These characteristics are sharply indicated in the enlarged photographs of the writing in the City Temple, London, and in the Montclair writing.

A minute comparison of the authenticated writing with the writing on every page of the alleged will, and in particular with the lines 10, 11 and 12 on page 5, has failed to detect in any part of the will the characteristics of the writing of 'Abdu'l Baha, as shown in the authenticated specimens.

In addition to these differences in writing habits, there are also differences in the shapes of many of the parallel characters in the body of the document compared with the authenticated writing, as in the case of the signatures mentioned above.

(Signed)
C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL *

** A Photostat copy of Dr. Mitchell's report is in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.*

Dr. Mitchell not only spent months examining the enlarged specimens submitted to him, but he examined minutely every line of the ten photographs of the alleged will, and his conclusion is that it is not written throughout by the same person. This fact, in addition to others, indicates that the will is spurious, especially if we bear in mind that Shoghi Effendi, and the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, assert that every word of it is written in the hand of 'Abdu'l Baha. Also if we bear in mind that it is undated, and unwitnessed, and that it contradicts the teachings that both Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha gave during their lifetimes — that the Baha'i Cause is a spiritual democracy and not a theocracy. The appointment of a hereditary guardianship contradicts this.

Dr. Mitchell's report also shows that none of the handwriting of the alleged will is the

same as the authentic specimens of ‘Abdu’l Baha’s handwriting that were submitted to him.

The ratio between the depth of the gap and its breadth. Dr. Mitchell shows, is totally different between the authentic signatures and those in the alleged will. It is as 1:1.4 to 1.6 in the authentic signatures, whereas in the disputed signatures it is as 1:2.3 to 2.6.

Most persons are unaware of the fact that handwriting experts use modern inventions that measure the slants, the spaces, and the tremors of writing so accurately that it makes the difference between two specimens of different writing overwhelmingly apparent, when these are enlarged, even though one of the specimens may be so clever a forgery of the other as to appear identical to the naked eye.

Those Baha’is who assert that they are familiar with the handwriting of ‘Abdu’l Baha, and have compared it with the writing of the will, and have found them identical, reveal the fact that they are either totally unaware of the science used by the best handwriting experts, or else fear has prompted them to assert their belief in the authenticity of the will — fear of being excommunicated if they so much as question the document. This science that the best handwriting experts use is so mathematically accurate that any number of experts using these modern inventions will arrive at the same results.

I have already referred to the extreme care that ‘Abdu’l Baha showed in regard to letters purporting to be from him, sent or brought to this country. The following instance shows that he was even more careful to make certain that any Tablet or document of his relating to important public matters was properly translated and authenticated before it was sent out. He wrote a Tablet to the Secretary of the Court for Durable Peace, at The Hague, on December 17, 1919, and he considered it necessary to have four men translate it. These four men were Shoghi Effendi (Rabanni), Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Mirza Lotfullah Hakim, and Dr. J. E. Esselmont. This Tablet was signed ‘Abdu’l Baha Abbas, and was published in the Star of the West (Baha’i Magazine). August 1, 1920, with the four names of the translators and witnesses.

The quadruple witnessing of this Tablet, written two years before ‘Abdu’l Baha passed from this world, makes it evident that he did not consider Shoghi Effendi careful enough, or efficient enough, to translate the Tablet to the Court for Durable Peace without the help of three other men. Is it likely, then, that at this very time an authentic will of ‘Abdu’l Baha’s, of infinitely greater importance than this Tablet to the Hague, should lay hidden in the earth, undated and unwitnessed, in which this same Shoghi Effendi was appointed sole guardian of the Baha’i Cause, with more potential power and wealth than a king and pope combined? And that later this same will was translated by one person only, the beneficiary himself — Shoghi Effendi. Is this in accordance with ‘Abdu’l Baha’s super-carefulness?

Spiritual indications that the will is spurious.

I have tried to show that the authenticity of the alleged will does not stand the test of handwriting analysis; that its contents contradict the often expressed intent of Baha’u’llah and of ‘Abdu’l Baha for Baha’is; and that its undated, unwitnessed condition is in direct contradiction to ‘Abdu’l Baha’s habits of extreme, meticulous care in regard to everything which he wrote.

I wish now to trace the devastating effect of this alleged will upon the organization which accepted it blindly, and to show by contrast the splendid work which has been done by Baha’is who have acted freely and in accordance with true Baha’i teachings.

‘Abdu’l Baha said that if an angel from heaven comes down and tries to change the

teachings of Baha'u'llah, do not believe him. Shoghi Effendi has changed them by pronouncements and actions which are in direct contradiction to Baha'i teachings—above all he has changed the very character and fundamental principle of the Cause by putting a theocracy, which the founders said it Cause by putting a theocracy, which the founders said it was not, in place of the spiritual democracy which they said, over and over again, it is. The following instances show what acceptance of the alleged will has done to the blind followers of its rules.

Mr. Horace Holley, as spokesman for Shoghi Effendi, made this statement in 1925: **"The individual conscience must be subordinated to the decisions of the elected Spiritual Assembly."** *

**Baha'i Year Book, Vol.1, P. 55*

This statement strikes at the very foundation of the Baha'i Cause, as one of its cardinal teachings is that man must have freedom of conscience. Among dozens of instances that could be given of 'Abdu'l Baha's statements on this subject is the following:

"... **the conscience of man is sacred and to be respected; and that liberty thereof produces widening of ideas, amendment of morals, improvement of conduct, disclosure of the secrets of creation, and manifestation of the hidden verities of the contingent world. ... So in the world of existence two persons unanimous in all grades (of thought) and alt beliefs cannot be found, 'The ways unto God are as the number of the breaths of (His) creatures,' is a mysterious truth.** . . . " *

** Traveller's Narrative. Translated by Prof. Edward G. Browne.*

Again, about twenty years later, 'Abdu'l Baha said:

"... **Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and the development is stifled, whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted, the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail, that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs, development and growth are inevitable."** *

** The Promulgation of Universal Peace. Vol. I. Page 192.*

We can see from the foregoing that 'Abdu'l Baha emphasized the necessity of man's being able to exercise freedom of conscience, as Baha'u'llah did.

The reason Mr. Holley, as spokesman for Shoghi Effendi, made this incredible statement that

" . . . the individual conscience must be subordinated to the Spiritual Assembly, . . ." is that since 'Abdu'l Baha passed from this world the Baha'i teachings have been garbled in such a way as to lead people to suppose that when Baha'u'llah said that mankind must obey its governments he meant the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is!

In order to realize how this inversion could have taken place we must understand that Baha'u'llah gave to the world, as one of the cardinal points of his teachings, the necessity for a Supreme Tribunal, composed of the wisest men in each nation, and he

used such expressions as “Assembly” and “National Assembly,” in speaking of these anticipated Parliaments of the world. This title, “National Assembly,” was adopted by the Baha’is when they began their activities in America over forty years ago. Whether the leaders of that time did this with the intention of making the writings of Baha’u’llah appear as if they referred to the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is whenever he spoke of the National Assemblies, or Parliaments of the world, I do not know. But I do know that Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is are forcing this interpretation upon the Baha’i world today.

The only valid subordination of the individual conscience is, according to the teachings of Baha’u’llah and of ‘Abdu’l Baha, in civil matters, as for instance in the election of Mr. Roosevelt for president. He won by majority vote, therefore those who had voted for Thomas Dewey had to subordinate their individual conscience, that is their preference, to the wishes of the majority.

During the lifetime of ‘Abdu’l Baha the attempts of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is to organize the Baha’i Religion were held in abeyance, but after he passed from this world, under the dictates of Shoghi Effendi, they swung it into an organization the like of which has not been seen since the dark ages. They tried to exercise the power over the Baha’i world that Baha’u’llah said would be vested in the SUPREME TRIBUNAL of the future world governments. In order to enforce this power they excommunicated those who would not accept their pronouncements, and twice the members of the National Assembly sued at law in order to try and prevent other Baha’is from promulgating the religion which they held in common; but, fortunately, they lost both these suits. Judge Valente, reprimanding them, reminded them of the Bill of Rights, which grants freedom to every man to practice his religion unmolested. All of this the reader can learn in the ensuing pages.

The Tablet that ‘Abdu’l Baha wrote to the Court for Durable Peace at The Hague, referred to in the preceding pages, is one among many instances that could be cited confirming what has here been stated — that when Baha’u’llah and ‘Abdu’l Baha speak of “Assembly,” and “National Assemblies” in relation to world governments, they do not mean the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is. Part of this Tablet of ‘Abdu’l Baha’s follows:

To the Central Organization for Durable Peace
Office of Secretary:
19 Prinsesegracht The Hague, Holland
Executive Committee

“O ye esteemed ones who are the pioneers among the well-wishers of the world of humanity!

“There is not one soul whose conscience does not testify that in this day there is no more important matter in the world than that of Universal Peace. . . .

“. . . the teachings of His Holiness Baha’u’llah were not limited to the establishment of Universal Peace . . .

“. . . Among these teachings was the independent investigation of reality. . .
“. . . the oneness of the world of humanity. .
“. . . religion must be the cause of fellowship and love. . .
“. . . religion must be in conformity with science and reason. . . .
“. . . religious, racial, political, economic and patriotic prejudices destroy the edifice of humanity. ...

“Regarding the economic prejudice, it is apparent that whenever the ties

between nations become strengthened and the exchange of commodities accelerated, and any economic principle is established in one country, it will ultimately affect the other countries and universal benefits will result. ...

"As to political prejudice, the policy of God must be followed and it is indisputable that the policy of God is greater than human policy. We must follow the Divine policy and that applies to all individuals. He treats all individuals alike: no distinction is made, and that is the foundation of the Divine Religions.

"And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is the origination of one language that may be spread universally among the people . . . . in order that this universal language may eliminate misunderstandings from among mankind.

". . – the unity of women and men. The world of humanity has two wings — one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. . . .

". . . voluntary sharing of one's property with others among mankind. This voluntary sharing is greater than equality . . . But this should not be introduced by coercion so that- it becomes a law and man is compelled to follow it. Nay, rather, man should voluntarily and of his own choice sacrifice his property and life for others, and spend willingly for the poor."

"And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah is man's freedom, and through the ideal Power he should be free and emancipated from the captivity of the world of nature;

"And among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is that religion is a mighty bulwark. If the edifice of religion shakes and totters, commotion and chaos will ensue and the order of things will be utterly upset, for in the world of mankind there are two safeguards that protect man from wrong doing. One is the law which punishes the criminal; but the (aw prevents only the manifest crime and not the concealed sin; whereas the ideal safeguard, namely, the religion of God, prevents both the manifest and the concealed crime, trains man, educates morals, compels the adoption of virtues and is the all-inclusive power which guarantees the felicity of the world of mankind. But by religion is meant . . . the foundation of Divine Religions and not human imitations.

"And among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is that although material civilization is one of the means for the progress of the world of mankind, yet until it becomes combined with Divine civilization the desired result, which is the felicity of mankind will not be attained. . . . Divine civilization is the lamp itself and the glass without the light is dark. Material civilization is like the body. No matter how infinitely graceful, elegant and beautiful it may be, it is dead. Divine civilization is like the spirit, and the body gets its life from the spirit, otherwise it becomes a corpse. It has thus been made evident that the world of mankind is in need of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. . . .

"In fine such teachings are numerous. These manifold principles, which

constitute the greatest basis for the felicity of mankind and are of the bounties of the Merciful, must be added to the matter of Universal Peace and combined with it, so that results may accrue. Otherwise the realization of Universal Peace (by itself) in the world of mankind is difficult. As the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah are combined with Universal Peace, they are like a fable provided with every kind of fresh and delicious food. Every soul can find, at that fable of Infinite bounty that which he desires. If the question is restricted to Universal Peace alone, the remarkable results which are expected and desired will not be attained. The scope of Universal Peace must be such that all the communities and religions may find their highest wish realized in it. At present the teachings of His Holiness Baha'u'llah are such that all the communities of the world, whether religious, political or ethical, ancient or modern, find in the teachings of Baha'u'llah the expression of their highest wish.

"For example, the question of Universal Peace, about which His Holiness Baha'u'llah says that the SUPREME TRIBUNAL must be established; although the LEAGUE OF NATIONS has been brought into existence, yet it is incapable of establishing Universal Peace. But the Supreme Tribunal which Universal Peace. But the Supreme Tribunal which His Holiness has described will fulfil this sacred task with the utmost might and power. And his plan is this: that the national assemblies of each country and nation — that is to say parliaments —should elect two or three persons who are the choicest men of that nation, and are well-informed concerning international laws and the relations between governments and aware of the essential needs of the world of humanity in this day. The number of these representatives should be in proportion to the number of inhabitants of that country. The election of these souls who are chosen by the national assembly, that is, the parliament, must be confirmed by the upper house, the congress and the cabinet and also by the president or monarch so that these persons may be the elected ones of all the nation and the government. From among these people the members of the Supreme Tribunal will be elected, and all mankind will thus have a share therein, for every one of these delegates is fully representative of his nation. When the Supreme Tribunal gives a ruling on any international question, either unanimously or by majority-rule, there will no longer be any pretext for the plaintiff or ground of objections for the defendant. In case any of the governments or nations, in the execution of the irrefutable decision of the Supreme Tribunal, be negligent or dilatory, the rest of the nations will rise up against it, because all the governments and nations of the world are the supporters of this SUPREME TRIBUNAL. Consider what a firm foundation this is! But by a limited and restricted LEAGUE the purpose will not be realized as it ought and should. This is the truth about the situation, which has been stated."

(Signed)

Abdul-Baha Abbas
Haifa, Palestine, December 17, 1919

Published in STAR of the WEST August 1, 1920
Translated by: Shoghi Rabbani (Effendi)
Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi,
Mirza Lotfullah Hakim,
Dr. J. E. Esslemont.

The reader will note that whenever 'Abdu'l Baha speaks of **"National Assemblies,"** he always adds **"The Parliaments of the world."**

This Tablet, a resume of some of Baha'u'llah teachings, deals chiefly with the necessity of establishing a SUPREME TRIBUNAL. The United Nations Organization is an embryonic SUPREME TRIBUNAL such as he envisioned eighty years ago, and even though the results of this first attempt may still be far from successful, yet the beginning of the fulfilment of this prophecy is a harbinger of better things to come.

When Baha'u'llah spoke of the necessity for the establishment of the SUPREME TRIBUNAL, he released with those words the leaven of the Spirit to all mankind. Those who were receptive, including people who may never have heard of Baha'u'llah, became animated by this leaven to carry parts of the Baha'i Teachings into action. And this leaven has been working ever since. For eighty years it has worked in many ways — worked through constructive means, such as inspiring those with scientific talents to discover great inventions — airplanes, radio and many others — which united the world physically in preparation for its spiritual unification. This leaven worked even through destructive forces such as the great chastisement of the two world wars. During and after this last world war we have heard it said frequently that "there are no atheists in the fox holes."

'Abdu'l Baha's method of conveying the Baha'i Message was largely by way of tests. He gave the universal teachings in three ways — by speech, by deeds, and as Baha'u'llah did, by the leaven of the Spirit. He rarely said, "Do not do this or that." He never interfered with anybody's conception of religion. If one could not learn by precept, and example, and the awakening of the Inner Light, one had to learn by the more difficult way of tests and chastisements. The spiritual law of tests is one of the cardinal points of every religion that ever existed; it is Christ's spiritual law of Cause and Effect — "As a man sows so shall he reap." It is one aspect of the Buddhist and Hindu Law of Karma. It applies to all of us whether we believe in it or not, and regardless of what religion we belong to, or even if we belong to none at all. The following, by 'Abdu'l Baha, on "Tests" embodies this fundamental law of all religions:

In this day everyone must be tested, as the time of the Chosen Ones to prove their worth is indeed very short. The Day of Attainment is drawing to a close for them. The First Fruits must be ripened in Spirit, mellowed in Love, and consumed by their self-sacrifice and severance. None other are acceptable as First Fruits and all that fail to attain to the standard through the tests are relegated to the many who are called.

The more one is severed from the world, from desires, from human affairs and conditions, the more impervious does one become to the tests of God. Tests are a means by which a soul is measured as to its fitness and proven out by its own acts. God knows its fitness beforehand and also its unprepared ness, but man, with an ego, would not believe himself unfit unless proof were given him. Consequently his susceptibility to evil is proven to him when he falls into the tests and the tests are continued until the soul realizes its own unfitness, then remorse and regret tend to root out the weakness.

The same test conies again in a greater degree, until it is shown that a former weakness has become a strength and the power to overcome evil has been established.

* * *

The worst enemies of the Cause are in the Cause and mention the Name of God. We need not fear the enemies on the outside for such can be easily dealt with. But the enemies who call themselves Friends and who persistently violate every fundamental law of Love and Unity are difficult to deal with in this Day. . . .

This last paragraph applies overwhelmingly to the activities of Shoghi Effendi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is. They have violated the principles of brotherhood and unity because of their inversions of the Baha'i teachings. These inversions are all the more tragic at this particular time when the world has been made

receptive, through much suffering, to the great universal principles *of* the Baha'i Religion. Two prophecies of Baha'u'llah have been so accurately fulfilled — the discovery of Atomic Power, and the embryonic Supreme Tribunal as manifested in the United Nations Organization that we would do well to consider the third – the possible destruction of our planet unless we circumvent this threatened fate by a balanced spiritual civilization.

In an interview given to Dr. Getsinger. Part of this is published in Divine Art of Living

The following prophecy of 'Abdu'l Baha, recorded by Charles Mason Remey in answer to some questions that he asked in 1911, may also be an indirect allusion to atomic power:

What is the significance of the prophecy, 'Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days (1335)?' Daniel 12:12.

A. After that date 3 great disturbance — a terrible (material) calamity is to happen in the world.

Q. Is it to be in the form of war and strife, or will it be as an earthquake, such as has happened in Messina and elsewhere?
A. Wars and earthquakes, such as you have mentioned, will happen, but these, compared with this great catastrophe to come, will be as nothing. As in the past whole peoples and civilizations have, through physical changes, been obliterated, so that not a trace has remained, so it will be when this great change shall take place.

Q. In the Bible there is a prophecy: "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third part shall be left therein" (Zechariah 13:8-9.)

Does this refer to the happening in question?
A. Yes.

Q. Will this take place soon after the date 1917 (which is the date mentioned, 1335 days) or 1335 A.H. (After Mohammed), or 1917 A.D., or will it happen in the very distant future?
A. It is not so very soon after nor again is it in the so very distant future.

At a later date 'Abdu'l Baha explained that these 1335 days mean 1335 solar years, from the flight of Mohammed from Medina to Mecca, which is the beginning of the Mohammedan era 622. This date added to 1335 is 1957.

Strangely enough, as I finish this book in February, 1946, a radio commentator flashes the news that a nationwide poll representing a cross section of the United States, revealed the fact that millions of people believe that within the next ten or fifteen years Russia and the United States will be at war. If this happens we know it will be an atomic war. We also know that the prophecy in the Bible, ". . . two parts therein shall be cut off and die but the third shall be left therein," might then become a reality. Ten or fifteen years from now would bring the date for this cataclysm within the specified time of both this Biblical prophecy and the foregoing prophecy of 'Abdu'l Baha. However, both Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha show that we can circumvent threatened cataclysms through faith in God and prayer, combined with the practice of the principles of religion. In other words, we can deflect any destructive forces leveled at us if enough people will revivify their faith in God and prayer. Baha'u'llah says on this subject:

"The decrees of God as related to fate and predestination are of two kinds. Both are to be obeyed and accepted. The one is irrevocable; the other is, as termed by men, impending. To the former all must unreservedly submit, inasmuch as it is fixed and settled. . . .

The decree that is impending, however, is such that prayer and entreaty can succeed in averting it."

This matter of freedom of conscience is the most important part of the Baha'i Teachings. God has given man free-will, and no earthly priest craft or dictatorship must interfere with man's using that free-will in matters of faith and the inner relationship between the soul and God. This is the meaning of the spiritual democracy of which 'Abdu'l Baha so often speaks — religion percolating through all the affairs of our daily life, and an ideal political government coming into existence as the result of the change of man's nature and belief.

Many great evils are caused by leaders who have Tried to control the conscience of man. We have seen this in our day in Russia, where the first canon of communism is atheism. Over the Kremlin is written: "Religion is the opiate of the people." In Nazi Germany political dictators said: "You must believe in no form of government but mine." A religious dictator says in substance: "You must not believe in any conception of God except what I tell you to believe."

This is just the twist that the present leaders of the Baha'i organization have tried to give to the Universal Message of Baha'u'llah.

There are many other wholly un-Baha'i edicts that Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is have issued beside these two that follow:

"... **the individual conscience must- be subordinated to the decisions of the Spiritual Assembly,. – . and:**

"... individual Baha'i effort without due consultation is foredoomed to failure."

Other un-Baha'i edicts that are given from time to time in the secret paper BAHA'I NEWS, and circulated by the National Spiritual Assembly among its members are : *

1. "Recognized Baha'is of the United States and Canada must not take part in any local, provincial or national election, conducted by political parties, where votes are to be cast for one or two or more candidates."
(This forbids voting for our presidents or voting in other government matters.)

2. "Recognized Baha'is must not run for any public office as candidates of any political party, nor take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion of any party or party platform.

3. "Recognized Baha'is must not vote in any election based upon a party system."

4."Recognized Baha'is must abstain from association with movements advocating social changes that presume partisan political action.

5. "Recognized Baha'is who speak on Baha'i platforms must abstain from making any critical statements about any particular government or national policy."

6. "Every Local Baha'i Center must be responsible for the carrying out of the above laws by the Baha'is in their respective communities. Local membership must include only the names of those who faithfully obey these regulations."

7. "Recognized Baha'is must not retain or apply for membership in any church or religious group."

8. "Baha'is failing to give unreserved obedience to the above regulations and to numerous others which are constantly legislated, and month after month spread on the pages of the BAHA'I NEWS by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, are expelled or excommunicated from the Cause, and the Baha'is are not permitted to associate with these expelled or excommunicated ones, regardless of Friendship, no matter of how long standing, nor of the depth of their affection or love."

** See BROKEN SILENCE, pages 155-6, by Ahmad Sohrab, New History Foundation, 132 East 65th Street, New York, N.Y.*

Every one of these edicts are inversions of the Baha'i Teachings, as given to the world by the Founders of the Cause-In saying that recognized Baha'is must not vote in any election based on a party system Shoghi Effendi and his hierarchy have set up what might be considered a government within each government in every country where there are enough of his followers. Over that government he is supreme dictator. His subjects must pay taxes to him (tithes) and he forbids his followers to vote on national and civic affairs. All his edicts no matter how un-patriotic, or how much in violation of the universal principles of the Baha'i Religion, must be obeyed under threat of excommunication.

This revival of excommunication is a horrible inversion of the Baha'i teachings — the Revelation for which Baha'u'llah suffered imprisonment for twenty-five years, and 'Abdu'l Baha for forty years — the Cause for which twenty thousand martyrs sacrificed their lives to establish freedom of conscience and to unite all mankind regardless of religion, race or country. The idea of excommunication is impossible in the world envisaged by Baha'u'llah.

For those who would like a list of books written by the Founders of the Baha'i Religion, Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha, I refer them to the following:

Hidden Words by Baha'u'llah
Seven Valleys " "
Book of Iqan " "
Tablets " "

Some Answered Questions by 'Abdu'l Baha
Mysterious Forces of Civilization by 'Abdu'l Baha
Promulgation of Universal *Peace* by 'Abdu'l Baha (Vol. I., II, III.)
Tablets of 'Abdu'l Baha (Vol. I., II, III.)
Talks by 'Abdu'l Baha, in London
Talks by 'Abdu'l Baha, in Paris
Divine Wisdom of 'Abdu'l Baha.

The Lawsuit of the National Spiritual Assembly

The most shocking act of the Baha'i organization considered from the point of view of the intentions of the Founders of the Cause was the legal prosecution brought by the organization against certain well known Baha'is who were trying to spread the teachings in the universal spirit in which they had been first given to the world. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab founded the New History Society in New York in 1929, and The Caravan a year later, with the sincere desire of spreading the Baha'i teachings and spirit. They were so successful that Shoghi Effendi 'excommunicated' them, and later, with his sanction, the National Spiritual Assembly brought suit against them in 1941. I quote in full the statement made against them by the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is:

Statement made by plaintiffs:

1. The individual plaintiffs sue, as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. The Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the City of New York, a religious corporation, is a co-plaintiff.

The complaint alleges that the name Baha'i denotes a religion identified with the name of the founder BAHA.

2. The plaintiffs claim to be the authorized representatives of all the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

3. They allege that they are publishing books and other publications which teach Baha'i Religion.

4.They charge that the defendants, who were members prior to April 5, 1929, of the Baha'i Congregation of the City of New York, have been conducting, without the authority of plaintiffs, meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings and other activities, and announcing and advertising the same as Baha'i meetings, lectures, classes, etc.

5.They complain that the defendants have been giving these meetings, lectures, etc., a Baha'i appearance and atmosphere by teaching, in connection therewith, a religion described as the Baha'i Religion and that they have created an erroneous impression that they are connected with and authorized to represent the Baha'i religion and to solicit contributions therefor.

6. In addition plaintiffs complain of the opening of a book shop by the defendants under the name of "Baha'i Book Shop" and of the listing of the name of Baha'i Book Shop and of the listing of the shop in the telephone directory under the name, immediately over the name of Baha'i Center" which represents the listing of plaintiffs' New York office and book shop.

The following is the decision rendered by Supreme Court Justice Louis A. Valente in favor of Mrs. Chanler and Mirza Sohrab:

1. In the Court's opinion, the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion.

2. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities.

3. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with or affiliated with the meetings, lectures, etc., and book shop of the plaintiffs.

4. (a) Defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism, (b) to conduct meetings, (c) to collect funds, (d) to sell literature in connection therewith, and (e) to conduct a book shop under the title of "Baha'i Book Shop."

Evidently the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is were unable to see that in bringing this lawsuit, they were not only utterly un-Baha'i but also they were asking for something that could not be granted without violating the constitution of the United States. For the Bill of Rights grants freedom of conscience and the right of each citizen to practice his religion without interference.

The Assembly appealed to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court three months later to have the decision of the Supreme Court Justice A. Valente set aside. But again the National Spiritual Assembly lost, and they were put on record for all time as not only trying to violate the constitution of the United States, but also of violating one of the most important teachings of the Baha'i religion, which they purport to represent—freedom of conscience and the right of every man to practice his religion without interference.

These two lawsuits had the same significance to Baha'is as if the followers of one Christian sect had sued the followers of another sect to prohibit them from calling themselves "Christian" or from practicing their religion. For the name BAHA'I means a follower of Baha'u'llah just as the word CHRISTIAN means a follower of Christ.

One more matter, in which the organization of Baha'is under Shoghi Effendi has departed from the original intent and practice of the Founders, is in their attitude toward money: they have organized the Baha'i Cause on a commercial basis. Nothing could be more abhorrent to the true Baha'i spirit than this. They themselves described their organization when they applied to the commissioner of Patents for a copyright on the name 'Baha'i' as follows:

"National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of "National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, a common law corporation, organized and operated under a declaration of trust doing business at- . . ."

* * *

National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada."

(Signed)

Horace Holley.

All of this is utterly un-Baha'i and anti-religious from every point of view. The members of the Assembly instituted a Baha'i Fund, and made subscriptions to this fund an article of faith. In their Baha'i catechism entitled *"Twenty lessons in Baha'i Administration" there is* this question:

"Why are the contributions to the Baha'i Fund the measure of the faith of a believer?"

Shoghi Effendi's position and procedure in instituting this Baha'i Fund and in making contributions to it an article of faith, has the same significance as if, after the crucifixion of Christ, a so-called Guardian had arisen and proceeded to commercialize Christ's teachings, and had instituted a Christ Fund. If Peter had been asked to contribute to this Fund he would have replied:

"But I have no money. Christ told me to go forth without purse or script, and spread his teachings."

"Never mind what Christ said," the Guardian replies, "you contribute to this Christ Fund or you are not a believer in Christ, and you will be excommunicated.

"Furthermore don't go out and teach individually, for your efforts will be foredoomed to failure."

The other disciples would be subjected to this same treatment. Yet despite this they would go forth and spread Christ's teachings as he told them to. Shortly after, they would be summoned to court on the complaint of this supposed Guardian and his organization, who reports to the judge:

"Judge, our organization has trade-marked the name of Christ, and we have incorporated the religion of Christ, and these men who call themselves his disciples have no right to use that name, or to teach without our permission."

To this the judge replies:
"But Peter and Paul and everyone in the world has an equal right to call themselves "Christians" and to teach Christ's Cause. You cannot copyright the name of Christ, nor restrain men from spreading His teachings. Religion is free, and every man has a right to practice his religion and to spread it to others."

And so the Guardian would lose his suit and Christ's teachings would be placed in the public domain.

This is an exact parallel of the attitude of the Baha'i organization to the universal teachings of Baha'u'llah, and in particular of the Assembly's insistence upon a money contribution as being the gauge of a believer's faith.

A Modern-day saint.

To come back to the matter of independent Baha'i effort and the results which it achieves when carried out in a spirit of sincerity. I myself have tried to follow the teachings in my every-day life and I know that I have been guided and used according to my capacity, just as each one everywhere will be if he prays continually to know the will of God, and reads the signs along the way to find out that will.

This is a different age from that of Saint Peter, and the 'purse and scrip' that we are counseled to leave behind today in spreading the Baha'i Cause is a different kind — we must not be attached to worldly possessions. One of these disciples of Baha'u'llah, and of 'Abdu'l Baha, who exemplifies changing civilization, but with no change in fervor of devotion, is Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, against whom the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is brought suit. Although she had wealth, social position, and education, she armored herself with the necessary equipment for discipleship. She uses her wealth, her time and her talent entirely in spreading the Baha'i teachings. This includes the publication of the magazine, NEW HISTORY, and also THE CARAVAN, which she, together with her late husband, Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab. Founded in 1933. Her four-story house is used as an office building to carry on the work, and these efforts have been crowned with enormous success. In the first twelve years of the publication of THE CARAVAN, from 1933 until January 1945, 480 chapters were established in twenty-four countries, with a membership of 80.000. This in spite of a global war which made correspondence difficult and sometimes impossible. At the present writing, January, 1946, there are 838 Chapters — an increase of 435 Chapters in one year and a total of 100,000 members.*

** See THE CARAVAN, January 1946*
132 East 65th Street, New York, N.Y.

Each Chapter receives its special charter, with membership pins — a globe flying a green flag with the words, 'The world is everybody's home.' The Chapters work independently on the lines of the 'Nine Baha'i Principles,' a compilation of the fundamental Baha'i teachings; and through the Pen Friends' Guide, thousands of boys and girls in all parts of the world learn to be friends without reference to race, color or creed. The CHILDREN'S CARAVAN has had such a phenomenal success that the NEW HISTORY magazine has been discontinued, (the last issue was January 1946) and a new and larger periodical entitled THE CARAVAN, to be issued quarterly, has taken its place.

Now let us see by contrast what happened to Shoghi Effendi's administration. During 'Abdu'l Baha's lifetime, according to the WORLD'S ALMANAC for 1916, there were 2,884 Baha'is in the United States belonging to the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is. But in 1926, after the first five years of Shoghi Effendi's administration, there were only 1,247 – a decrease of more than half. In 1936 the figures were still below those of 1916.

This shrinkage was due to two reasons. One was that when an alleged will was produced, after the death of 'Abdu'l Baha, appointing Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Cause, evidently those with spiritual insight seceded from the Assemblies, because they could not accept an unwitnessed, and undated document, which contradicted what 'Abdu'l Baha had said during his lifetime. A second reason evidently was that when others realized that Shoghi Effendi was substituting inverted principles in place of the teachings of Baha'u'llah, they also seceded.

Again in 1941 and 1942 the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is suffered an enormous loss after their defeat in two lawsuits, and their activities were recounted in that excellent history, BROKEN SILENCE.* It is said that more than half of their assemblies had to close through lack of members.

** By Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, New History Foundation, 132 East 65th Street, New York, N.Y.*

I do not wish to imply that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is are ogres. Not at all. They are highly conventional, highly respectable, and narrow. In fact they are the counter-part of those whom Christ stigmatized as Pharisees. They lack the sympathetic humanitarianism that is the earmark of a Spiritual person. But most of all they lack the faith in what Christ called "The Mysteries," and 'Abdu'l Baha calls "The Intuitions of the Holy Spirit." Lacking this attribute, on which depends the success of the other principles of religion, such as universal peace, they reduce religion to an organization. And unwittingly they are trying to convert people to Pharaseeism because they really believe it is the religion itself. As a result in their hands they have reduced the great universal Baha'i Teachings to a mediaeval cult. The religion for which 20,000 believers were martyred — for which Baha'u'llah suffered imprisonment for twenty-five years, and 'Abdu'l Baha forty years. Now the type of persecutor has changed. Shoghi Effendi, who purports to be the "Guardian" of the Baha'i Religion, is the arch persecutor of the religion itself, and of many of the disciples of Baha'u'llah and of 'Abdu'l Baha. In other words, by his inversion of the teachings of the Founders of this religion, and by his persecution of their disciples, such as we witnessed in the lawsuit, he and the Baha'i Assembly have done more damage to the Baha'i Cause than did those who were its open and avowed enemies.

Whether the alleged will of 'Abdu'l Baha is authentic or spurious, the results of the administration of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is stand as an historical indictment against them. They no more represent the Baha'i Religion than the bigots of the dark ages represented Christianity.

We had the dark, ages because the bigots of that era got control of Christ's teachings and tortured all those who did not comply with their interpretation. Shoghi Effendi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, cannot in this day resort to physical torture to enforce their will, but they have resorted to mental torture by blackmailing with excommunication ail those who do not comply with their inverted teachings.

Despite these distressing conditions that I have felt obliged to record at the cost of much time and money, my life has been strangely happy, successful, and intensely interesting. For there is no romance in life so glorious as that of being willing to follow a spiritual trail and be true to it, whether the work assigned to one is pleasant, or disagreeable and difficult. The things that seem disagreeable and difficult are only apparently so. For the moment we begin to do them in the same spirit as if they were coated with heavenly nectar, we discover that they contain surprising, wonderful and beautiful elements.

Due to the alternating experiences I have had — first a Roman Catholic, then a Protestant, then an agnostic, then a near-Communist, and then a Baha'i, I know that the greatest evil that can befall man is the loss of faith in God. When I became a Baha'i there was restored to me not only the best in Christianity, but the best in every religion that ever existed. And because 'Abdu'l Baha restored to me faith in God I have written this book, hoping that those who read it, even if they have little faith to start with, may realize that this can be increased through prayer.

The universality of the Baha'i Religion enabled me to appreciate and enjoy all religions. Today I can still go to a Roman Catholic Church and, despite the prejudices that I once had against it, pray to the Virgin Mary, and find no contradiction between this and my faith. I could likewise pray in Protestant churches, in a Mosque of Islam, or in a Hindu Temple, and I could pray in all the edifices of all the holy places in the world with deep reverence, knowing that they stand as a testimony of man's faith, of his effort to contact the vital Spirit of God. I feel a great kinship with all those who are striving for this contact. We need the unity of all the pro-Gods in the world in order to counteract the influence of the rising tide of the anti-Gods, and the Baha'i Religion is the synchronizer of all religions. 'Abdu'l Baha said:

There are prepared souls in every religion. Today God is working in all the

churches instructing many souls in celestial brotherhood. These souls are related by invisible and spiritual ties and are being ripened by the Holy Spirit.

'Abdu'l Baha warned that if those calling themselves "Baha'i" could not rise to the greatness of the Baha'i principles, then other individuals and groups would gradually put the principles into practice, even if they remained unaware from whence their inspiration arose. We see evidences of this all over the world today. There is *a* quickening of the spirit, and a great attempt is being made toward the unification of humanity.

Also there are some individuals who are already endowed with this consciousness of the new era. Since meeting 'Abdu'l Baha I have come in contact with three of these great intuitives — humanitarians who arrived at their destination through widely different channels. One stemmed his influence from the saints of Islam; one stemmed his influence from the saints within Christianity; and the most recent one I have contacted, within the last year, stems his influence from a great Avatar in India. These great intuitives exemplify the point, that those who live in accordance with the fundamental teachings of all religions can attain God consciousness regardless of the religion from which they stem. Those who make this attainment strive for the same goal — the spiritual unification of the race and the unification of man with God.

This is what Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha wish us to do. They did not come to establish a religion of withdrawal from other religions and to form a separate group, but to awaken in us an appreciation of the truths in all religions — to merge with our fellow men, and to come into that consciousness which Baha'u'llah described eighty years ago:

"The foundation of the Palace of Peace is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind."

Baha'u'llah also indicated that there are as many paths to God as the number of his creatures. For the Baha'i Religion is as wide and as deep as humanity itself and higher than its highest aims.
The magic flute of religion is again being heard in the world. Out of divers cults and reforms and sects people are stepping in tune to this call. Some are stirred to a new awakening, others are made uneasy, others are frightened, and others inspired to great achievements, according to each individual's capacity. Man is on the march and will never find peace until he finds his way back to God, the mystical fount without which he cannot survive. In the words of 'Abdu'l Baha:

... **A new era of divine consciousness is upon us. The world of humanity is going through** a **process of transformation. A new race is being developed. The thoughts of human brotherhood are permeating all regions. New ideals are stirring the depths of hearts and a new spirit of universal consciousness is hearts and a new spirit of universal consciousness is being profoundly felt by all men.**

Baha’i Books

Kitab i Aqdas (The Most Holy Book) Elder & Miller Translation

Kitab-i-Iqan (The Book of Certitude) – By Baha’u’llah

Abbas Effendi – His life and teachings by Phelps

Some Answered Questions, 1908 Edition by Abdu’l Baha

Epistle to the Son of the Wolf by Baha’u’llah – Translated from the French Edition by Julie Chanler

Paris Talks by Abdu’l-Baha

Some Answered Questions by Abdu’l-Baha

Tablets of Abdu’l-Baha

Asare Qalame A’ala, Vol. 1 (Arabic) by Baha’u’llah

Nashebo Faraz (Arabic) by Yadullah Thabit Rasikh

Baha’i Principles

The principles of the Bahá’í Faith were established by Bahá’u’lláh, the Founder of the Faith, in the latter half of the nineteenth century and promulgated by His Son and appointed successor, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá during a tireless twenty-nine year ministry. While on an historic teaching trip in 1912 throughout the United States and Canada, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explained Bahá’u’lláh’s Teachings to audiences of infinitely varied backgrounds. Many of His talks included discussions of such Bahá’í principles as:

1. The Oneness of Humanity

2. Independent, Unfettered Investigation of the Truth

3. Religion is Progressive, All having a Common Foundation

4. Religion must be the Source of Unity

5. True Science and True Religion must Correspond

6. The Equality of Men and Women

7. Universal Peace upheld by a Spiritual World Government

8. Universal Compulsory Education

9. A Spiritual Solution to the Economic Problem

10. A Universal Auxiliary Language

1. The Oneness of Humanity

The First Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*The Oneness of the World of Humanity.*"

"*Hands may be black, white, yellow or brown, but the hue of the heart is one." The first foundation stone is the Jasper; it is clear red, like the hue of the heart. In ancient times it was called the bloodstone.*" – Abdu'l-Baha

Any historical ingenious theories of essential racial superiority, which many people still embrace, can not survive investigation nor the inquisitive examination of a sincere seeker. Foundations of racial superiority prove to be nothing more than expressions of national or racial conceit and pomposity, when considered without egoism or prejudice. There is simply no known fact of human anatomy or physiology which implies that the capacity for culture of civilization inheres in one race or another race of mankind.

The strength of a living society depends upon the unity of its millions of diversified individuals in a common ideology, which must be excellently suited to the needs and conditions of that society. The science of Anthropology has revealed to us our common ancestry. Beyond doubt it has proved totally and conclusively that the human race, though varying in color, size, and feature, is not made up of different kinds and species. Humanity is one, Homo Sapiens, Man. We are one people from the same origin and with the same history.

"*In every dispensation the light of divine guidance has been focused upon one central theme.... In this wondrous Revelation, this glorious center, the foundation of Faith of God and the distinguishing feature of His Law, is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind.*" – Abdu'l-Baha

Long experience is at last convincing men of the truth of the prophetic teaching that selfish views and selfish actions inevitably bring social disaster, and that if humanity is not to perish ingloriously, each must look on the things of his neighbor as of equal importance with his own, and subordinate his own interests to those of humanity as a whole. In this way the interests of each and all will ultimately be best served.

"*That which the lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of all the world is the union of all its people in one universal Cause, one common Faith. This can in no wise be achieved except through the power of a skilled, an all-powerful and inspired Physician. This, verily, is the truth, and all else naught but error.*" – Baha'u'llah

We are all fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch, the flowers of one garden. This is most characteristic of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings onto us. The unity of mankind and of all created beings by God is the main theme of his teachings. Every member of the human family, whether of the peoples or of the governments, cities or nations, have become increasingly interdependent. For none, is self sufficiency any longer possible, in as much as political ties unite all people and nations, and the bonds of trade and industry, of agriculture and education, are being strengthened every day. Therefore, the unity and oneness of all mankind can in this day be achieved.

The whole of mankind is groaning, yearning to be lead to unity and to terminate its age long martyrdom for oneness. It yet stubbornly refuses to embrace the light and acknowledge the sovereign authority of the one Power that can extricate it from its entanglements. Our human society is now close to approaching the stage which the unification of the whole of mankind can be realized. All of mankind is but of one origin, our Shepherd is the Loving God. Upon us are bestowed His Most Great mercies, for we are considered as one fold. The highest and most excelling grace bestowed upon men is the grace of 'attaining unto the Presence of God' and of His recognition, which has been promised unto all people. This is the utmost degree of grace vouchsafed unto man by the All-Bountiful, the Ancient of Days, and the fullness of His absolute bounty upon His Creation.

In human nature, there is a spiritual and intellectual potentiality for development of a higher and higher form of social order. This order itself may reach its ultimate-size and shape with the boundaries of the planet, which is in a world order, but development within that final commonwealth is unlimited. The very nature of things is in the realization of the inner potentialities of man himself towards spiritual evolvement and enlightenment.

Before us is unfolded a principle of oneness among mankind. From family life to tribal life, to city to state, to provinces, kingdoms, and nations, a veil has been lifted from our hearts, that we, all races of mankind, can come together as one, united together. No longer as races of men, but as a race of mankind united in oneness and in brotherhood.

"*In that day, saith the lord of Hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.*" Zechariah 3:10

9. A Spiritual Solution to the Economic Problem

The Tenth Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*A Spiritual Solution to the Economic Problems of the World.*"

The ninth foundation stone, the Chrysoprasus, is like opaque Chrysolyte, a clear green which embodies truthfulness, justice, sincerity and purity, and these are the requisites necessary for the solution of all economic problems– the Golden Rule–"*Do unto others as Ye would have that they do unto you.*" – Abdu'l Baha

There is no cut and dried system of economics. Baha'u'llah establishes certain principles and leaves it to us to build the structure. There is a danger of the popular term "new world order" conjuring up a picture of something for nothing, of state supported individuals enjoying all the advantages of prosperity without any adequate contribution of hard work or service. Baha'u'llah requires every-one to work, no idle rich and no idle poor.

"*The most despised of men before God is he who sits and begs. ... The best men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds.*" – Baha'u'llah

The tragic story of modern waste is now common place. Fruit rotting on the trees and vines, sugar falling from wharves into the sea, wheat being burned. Millions underfed and in need of these things. Railways and ships being left idle. Producers anxious to sell and workers eager to gather and dispatch. But the destruction of food, and starvation, face each other across the world, even across the very same c country! Thus in spite of the fact that 'laissez faire' and unrestricted competition give way to socialization and cooperation, the basis of prosperity is still individual effort, hard work and independence.

" *... it is incumbent on everyone to engage in crafts and professions, for therein lies the secret of wealth to men of understanding! " " Trees that yield no fruit have been and will ever be for the fire.*" – Baha'u'llah

The weird and wonderful devices advocated to stimulate buying power brings wealth only back onto the wealthy. Future generations looking back at this period, must be forever amazed at a generation which could capture a beam from Arcturus to light the opening of the World's Fair and at the same time tolerate the poverty and misery of millions in the midst of an overwhelming plenty, a generation which spends a huge proportion of its wealth on war.

"The fundamentals of the whole economic structure are Divine in nature and are associated with the world

of the heart and spirit."

"*Although, the body politic is one family, yet because of lack of harmonious relations some members are comfortable and some in direct misery, some members are satisfied and some members are hungry, some members are clothed in most costly garments and some families in need of food and shelter. Why? Because this family (of mankind) lacks the necessary reciprocity and symmetry . This household is not well arranged. This household is not living under a perfect law. All the laws which are legislated do not insure happiness. They do not provide comfort. Therefore a law must be given to this family by means of which all the members will enjoy well being and happiness*." – Abdu'l Baha

Reciprocity and symmetry, these are the needs of the new social order. Cooperation must replace unbridled competition and planned economic system must take the place of the present muddle. This is the real economic problem, that in an age when cooperation is needed in human affairs, principles which served mankind successfully during the age of competition, are still upheld and regarded as inviolate. They are lamentably effete as shown by results.

Tariffs, currency manipulation, monopoly of raw materials, low wages, these are the great saboteurs of world prosperity. But they are only agents, the real monster is economic self-sufficiency. Nearly every nation, or groups of nations, has tried to practice this, and has gloried in what it believed to be its ability to be self-supporting. At the same time every effort has been made to keep up "foreign" trade, that is to sell the other man something without buying anything in return.

Economic self-sufficiency is born of fear and selfishness and leads straight to war. In this modern world all people are in need of each other, can supply each others' wants, and by the reciprocal action of buying and selling, contribute to an increasing standard of living. This is provided of course that the results of labor are equitably shared, and not concentrated in the hands of a minority. And the basis of equity must be universal, otherwise some nations will undersell all the others by using cheaper labor, and that will start the same old round again of nations will undersell all the others by labor, and that will start the same old tariffs, and etc.....

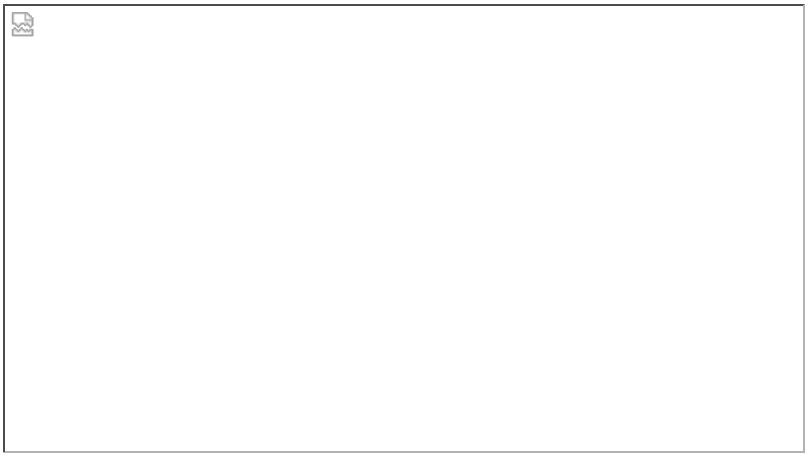
The economic problem, like every major difficulty facing us today, is insoluble except on a world scale. We can not have poverty in one country and prosperity in the rest, the Atlantic Charter recognizes this. Neither can we cure poverty and unemployment in one country alone, it is a world problem.

A spiritually united body can solve the economic problem once given the authority to set the world's standards. It can remove the barriers to international trade which result from the attempts of nations to be self-sufficient. It can liberate the energies now devoted to war for service to the arts of peace, and it can provide the necessary machinery for an easier and greater interchange of goods and services. Such things as a world currency, a world bank, a single system of weights and measures would come within its Charter. It must maintain free access to the raw materials of the planet, and protect the rights of all peoples. Maintain a universal minimum standard of living, and limit the economic power of individuals.

"*God is not partial and is no respecter of persons. He has made provisions for all. The harvest comes forth for everyone. The rain showers upon everybody and the heat of the sun is destined to warm everyone. Therefore there should be for all humanity the utmost happiness, the utmost comfort, the utmost well-being*." – Abdu'l Baha

10. A Universal Auxiliary Language

The Tenth Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"A Universal Auxiliary Language."



The eleventh foundation stone, the Jacinth, is somewhat like the Jasper, rose red, the universal color, the hue of the heart. A race can only understand the heart of another when it can speak the same language.

Abdu'l Baha

"*In all the world there is nothing more important than to be understood by your fellow men, for upon this depends the progress of civilization itself.*" – Abdu'l Baha

One of the major causes of differences today among the peoples and nations of the world is the diversity of their languages. each nation and people have their culture history, territory and language, isolated by boundaries from a neighboring people . Wars, misunderstandings, conflicts and disputes arise from the lack of clear understanding and communication between them. Although they belong to the same race, the lack of a common language is the greatest barrier between them. Were a universal auxiliary language in operation they would all be considered as one.

"*Only think how the International Language will facilitate intercommunication among all the nations of the earth. Half of our lives are consumed in acquiring a knowledge of language, for in this enlightened age every man who hopes to travel in Asia and Africa and Europe must learn several languages, in order that he may converse with their peoples. But no sooner does he acquire one language than another is needed. Thus one's whole life may be passed in acquiring those languages which are a hindrance to international communication. The; International Language frees humanity from all these problems.*"

"*Oneness of language will transform mankind into one world, remove religious misunderstandings and unite East and West in the spirit of brotherhood and love. Oneness of language will change this world from many families into one family. This auxiliary international language will gather the nations under one standard, as if the five continents of the world had become one, for then mutual interchange of thought will be. possible for all. It will remove ignorance and superstition, since each child of whatever race or nation can pursue his studies in science and art, needing but two languages his own and the international. The world of matter will become the expression of the world of mind. Then discoveries will be revealed, inventions will multiply, the sciences advance by leaps and bounds, the scientific culture of the earth will develop along broader lines. Then the nations will be enabled. to utilize the latest and best thought,. because expressed in the International Language.*" – Abdu'l Baha

The greatest means of progress between the East and West, would be to have a union of a common language. It would give the world the strongest impulse to become united for human advancement. It will upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity. It will make the earth one universal commonwealth. It will be the cause of love between the children of men and it shall cause good fellowship between the various races.

Since this principle of 'a universal auxiliary language' was proclaimed by Baha'u'llah, Basic English and a few other world languages have been invented to aid the world in a common means of understanding.

Ludovic Zamenhof, through the result of his devoted labor was the invention and widespread adoption of the language known as 'Esperanto'. Gaining the most popular support throughout the world communities, it has now stood the test of many years and has proved to be encouraging and a very satisfactory medium of international intercourse. New efforts shall always continue to establish a common means of communication between the races of men. The unity of mankind depends upon his abilities to understand the thoughts of his brother's heart.

"*The Sixth Ishraq' (Effulgence) is concord and union amongst men. Through the radiance of union have the regions of the world at all times been illumined, and the greatest of all means thereunto is the understanding of one another's writing and speech. Ere this, in our epistles, have We commanded the Trustees of the House of Justice, either to choose one of the existing tongues, or to originate a new one, and in like manner to adopt a common script, teaching these to the children in all the schools of the world, that the world may become even as one land and one home.*" – Baha'u'llah, Tablet of Ishraqat

It is not intended that there should be only one language. The international tongue and script is to auxiliary. National culture, literature, art, genius, are to be preserved and developed, but all people must learn at least two languages, i.e., their native tongue and the national tongue. Unity in diversity is the desired result and not uniformity. It is hoped that the world language will be spoken with enthusiasm to understand one's neighbor, many a burr and accent will enhance its beauty.

His Holiness Baha'u'llah wrote about this international language during the years of his life more than ninety years ago. He says; "That as long as an international language is not adopted, complete union between the various sections of the world will be unrealized, for we observe that misunderstanding keep people from mutual association, and these misunderstandings will not be dispelled except through an international auxiliary language".

2. Independent, Unfettered Investigation of the Truth

The Second Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*The Independent Investigation of the Truth.*"

"All must be free to seek out truth in their own way. The second foundation stone, the sapphire, is a clear blue, "true blue," and the color of faith, inspiration, loyalty and truth. Man must be free to soar in this "Dome of heavens blue truth," and see it with his own eyes." – Abdu'l-Baha

Truth is the object of search among the principles of finding and gaining new knowledge about the existence of ourselves. Without the gained knowledge, we are but in darkness, unlearned, uncaring and an unimportant animal of creation. However, when mankind is stimulated to even investigate the simplest of items, radiant brilliance of truth of science, religion, knowledge of all things are opened to his understanding. The complex patterns of the intellect, the mind in its functioning capacity, has the ability to comprehend both concrete and abstract thought patterns. Animals think in only terms of concrete visible patterns, while the whole of humanity has both the concrete and abstract thought patterns of tangible physical things as well as the unseen comprehension of intangible thoughts.

To be able to achieve the collected findings of investigated truth, we first must clear our thoughts of traditional concepts unsubstantiated by proofs. Secondly, we have to arise above the prejudices of cultural superstition and small insignificant and trivial notions. Possessing an open receptive mind is essential for positive and untarnished investigation. If we allow our thoughts to prematurely establish our concepts, that we are the only one right and everyone else can only be wrong, we then set before our investigation an obstacle to great to over come. Truth is of one source, foundation and origin. To achieve to the pathway of truth, we must be in unity, which is essential if we are to find the awaiting truth.

Truth is one, of one accord, and can not contradict another truth, for being of the same origin, truth is always of the same radiant vibration. A rose is beautiful and the same, no matter which garden it may bloom in. A star, shining forth constantly in the same radiance, whether from the East or Western horizon, is the same, never is its light opposed to the nature of its reality. In like manner, truth is of one nature and accord, no matter where it is found, or where it may achieve a radiant attraction to any individual.

We must find ourselves willing to clear away all that we have previously learned. Preventing traditional obstacles to clog our steps on the way to truth. We must not allow our love for any one religion or any one personality to blind our eyes and to cloud our thoughts, or we would become fettered by mere superstitions. When we become freed from all these bonds and begin seeking with liberated minds, then shall we be able to arrive at our goal, the radiant light of truth.

"*God Himself does not compel the soul to become spiritual. The exercise of the free human will is necessary.*" – Baha'u'llah

The investigation of truth is not binding upon mankind, rather, it is of a free will of the individual to pursue. For each individual should see and realize for himself the necessary truth manifested in the human temple. God has gifted mankind with the purest gift, the intellect. With such a tool, mankind may discover the realities of his existence, the essence of his creation, its purpose and meaning. The Prophets called onto mankind to open their eyes, not shut them, to use their reason and not to suppress it. "It is clear seeing and free thinking, not servile credulity, that will enable them to penetrate the clouds of prejudice, to shake off the fetters of blind imitation, and attain to the realization of the truth of a new Revelation."

Mankind should become use to using all the faculties God has so gloriously given to humanity for the acquisition of truth.

It is essential that individuals should become capable of discerning the true from the false, right from wrong, and of seeing things in their true proportions. Be weary of sayings and purposed truths without valid proofs and sufficient evidence to their credibility. If a heart of the seeker is pure, and their mind is free and escapes the worldly prejudices, the true and earnest seeker will not fail to recognize the divine glory in what ever temple it may become manifested.

"*O ye sons of intelligence! The thin eyelid prevents the eye from seeing the world and what is contained therein. Then think of the result when the curtain of greed over the sight of the heart! O people! The darkness of greed and envy obscures the light of the soul as the cloud prevents the penetration of the sun's rays.*" – Baha'u'llah

The use of the intellect is the fundamental tool and foundation to search after truth and knowledge. A pure heart and free will to search, to investigate, is the very foundation of a independent Search for Truth. Let it swell in the hearts of all mankind. Once truth is found, then unity can be achieved in its total essence.

3. Religion is Progressive, All having a Common Foundation

The Third Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*The Foundation of all Religions is One.*"

Each Revelator has given the same "New Heaven and Earth," but man has polluted and misrepresented these Divine Laws. In reality they are all one. The third foundation stone, the chalcedony, is pure white, of which Abdu'l-Baha said: "*While white is apparent, yet in it is hidden and concealed the seven colors. In white all colors are brothers and sisters.*" White is the symbol of purity, and in its origin each religion is pure, and a brother to every other religion, for all truth is one.

There is only one Religion.

There is but one GOD, by whatever name HE is called. There is but one human race. There can be but one religion. But this one religion has many Speakers, and many expressions.

The life and progress of man are dependent upon the Word of God. In past times the Human race was divided by oceans, mountain ranges, forests, deserts, all the physical barriers which modern inventions have succeeded in surmounting. This is one reason why there have been many Revealers of the Word of God, so that all mankind should receive it.

Baha'u'llah teaches that revelation is progressive, and that each manifestation of God answers the need of his time. This need has two voices. One, crying for spiritual food, satisfaction of the inner life, "knowledge of God", Faith, is always answered in the same way, through spiritual teachings, an outpouring of love, and a renewal of the Soul's vigor. The other voice cries for laws to regulate excesses, abrogation of outworn customs, and organization of daily affairs. Both cries are answered.

"*Know of a certainty that in every Dispensation the light of Divine Revelation has been vouchsafed to men in direct proportion to their spiritual capacity. Consider the sun. How feeble its rays the moment it appeareth above the horizon. How gradually its warmth and potency increases as it approaches its zenith, enabling meanwhile all created things to adapt themselves to the growing intensity of its light. How steadily it declines until it reaches its setting point. Were it all of a sudden to manifest the energies within it, it would no doubt cause injury to all created things.... In like manner, if the Sun of Truth were suddenly to reveal, at the earliest stages of its manifestation, the full measure of the potencies which the providence of the Almighty hath bestowed upon it, the earth of human understanding would waste away and be consumed; for men's hearts would neither sustain the intensity of the revelation, nor be able to mirror forth the radiance of its light. Dismayed and overpowered, they would cease to exist.*" – Baha'u'llah

The true educator of man is the Founder of Religion, who trains him in morals and the higher virtues and reveals to him his spiritual reality. All the Prophets have served this purpose. They have trained men in honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, reverence, modesty, civil obedience and self-sacrifice for others. The essential teaching of all Religions the same.

In time, religion becomes corrupt, it loses its early vigor and degenerates into institutions with no spiritual force to energize the inner life of man. Therefore it must be renewed and purified. This is accomplished through the influence of a Messiah, another Speaker.

Man, through successive seasons of civilization and decline, grows in understanding and social capacity. He therefore needs, from time to time, a further measure of that essential, real truth which is both the food of his spirit and the energy of new civilization. This truth is revealed by a Divine Messenger. Baha'u'llah teaches, that religious revelation is progressive, that old forms and institutions must give way to new ones, that revelation is according to the need and capacity of the time.

Jesus the Christ also supports these teachings, religious revelation is according to the capacity and the need. 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." "You cannot bear it now.' Jesus not only kept the full intensity of God's Revelation from them, but as well spoke the name of a successor, i.e., "The Spirit of Truth", is one of the many literal English expressions to say, 'Baha'u'llah'.

The names of the Speakers are different. They apply spiritual truth differently to different conditions, and that is a great source of annoyance to conventional minds.

The differences in religion are due to the different requirements of the times in which each revelation was made, and the enmity between religions is due to prejudice and ignorance.

"*Know thou assuredly that the essence of all the Prophets is one and the same. Their unity is absolute. God, the Creator saith: There is no distinction whatsoever among the Bearers of My Message. They all have but one purpose; their secret is the same secret*."

"*It is clear and evident, therefore, that any apparent variation in the intensity of their light is not inherent in the light itself, but should rather be attributed to the varying receptivity of an ever-changing world. Every Prophet whom the Almighty and Peerless Creator hath purposed to send to the peoples of the earth hath been entrusted with a Message, and charged to act in a manner that would best meet the requirements of the age in which he appeared*."

– Baha'u'llah

Religion is of one common foundation, it comes from God. His messengers speak the same words of unity, harmony and oneness. The Progressive Revelation brought by the Prophets of God, is but the progression of the spiritual evolution and education of mankind's soul, to bring him closer, back unto the pathway of his Creator. There is but one God, there is but one Word, and one Message for mankind.

4. Religion must be the Source of Unity

The Fourth Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*Religion Must be a Source of Unity*."

"*If it is not, its non-being were better than its being. The fourth foundation stone, the emerald, is green. Green is the color of harmony and unity. There is no color known that green will not harmonize with, as the green foliage blends with every hued flower. It is the color of immortality and also of humility.*" – Abdu'l-Baha

The oneness of Religion, is an essential part of World Order. For until men are united spiritually, there can be no true brotherhood, nor any universally accepted authority. And both are essential to a social order.

Various religious systems developing round the Person of their Founder, come into contact with other "religions" which have grown in the same way, and because they see the outer differences, accentuated by differences of climate, occupation and clothing, conclude that they are actually different religions. The inevitable conclusion is that "ours" is the only true one, thus making superficial differences into impassable barriers.

Baha'u'llah shows how the teaching of a Manifestation of God is divided into two parts. The spiritual principles which do not change, and social ordinances and decrees which vary with the growth of man. He asks none of the established religions to accept the laws and ordinances of one among them. Neither does he leave us to fight it out among ourselves. In his own Revelation he fulfills the hopes and promises of all previous religions, those promises recorded in their own scriptures. His Book of Laws has the same authority as the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount and is acceptably to all religions. Without denying what has gone before and without "lowering" one Manifestation in favor of another, the Truth revealed by Bahá'u'lláh is able to bring religious unity to a torn and divided race.

This new age, this new cycle of human power, revolves around a new principle, the principle of Unity. "*Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city, state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation building has*

come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationship and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life."

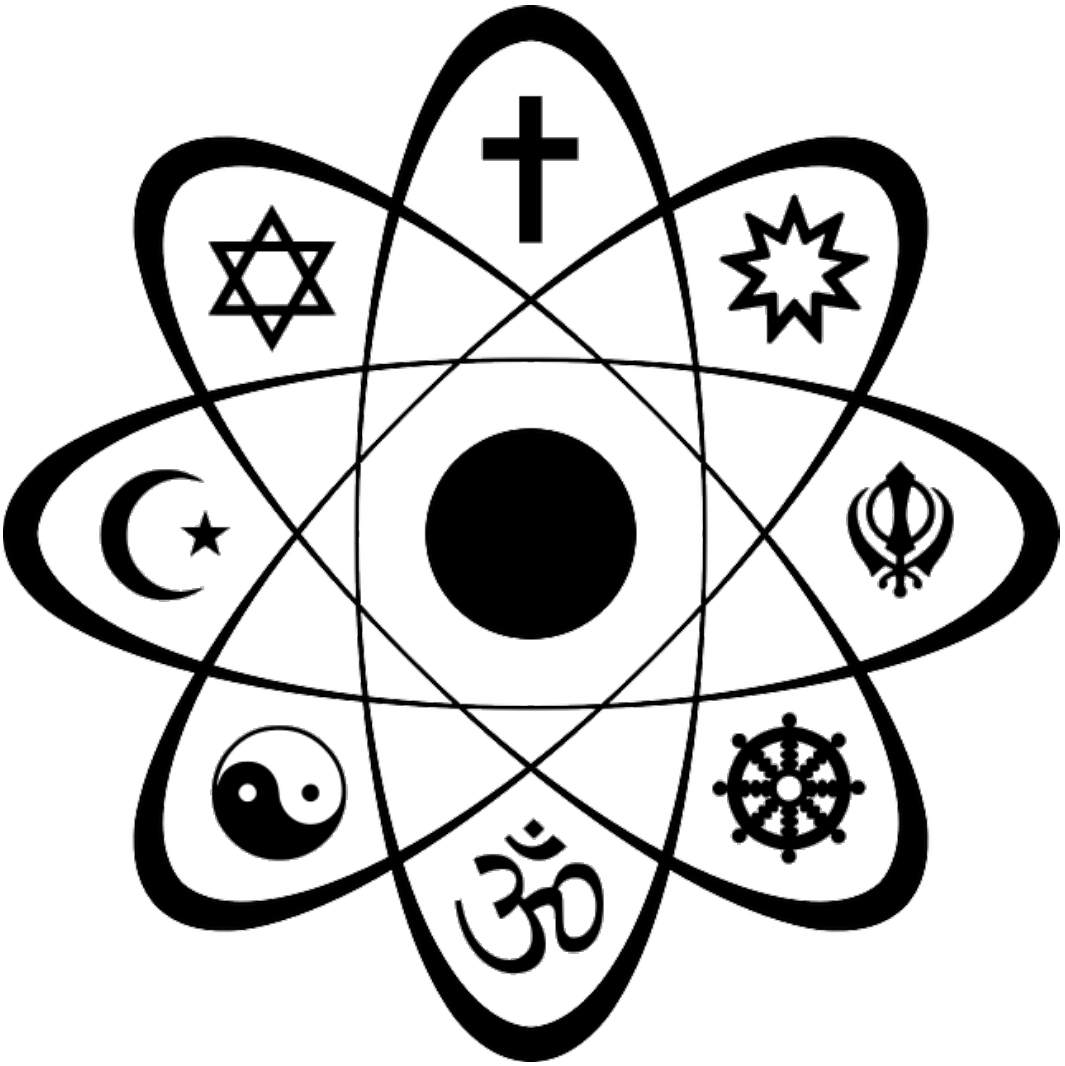
"*A new life, is, in this age, stirring within all the peoples of the earth; and yet none received its motive.*"

"*O ye children of men, the fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race…*"

– Abdu'l-Baha

5. True Science and True Religion must Correspond

The Fifth Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*Religion must be in accord with Science and Reason.*"



"Neither must deny the other. The fifth foundation stone, the Sardius, is red or brown, according to the way it is held. So it is with science and religion; they are in essence one, but differ in color or manifestation. Today they are coming closer together in their realities in the minds of thinking people." – Abdu'l-Baha

There exist conflict between science and religion today, which is not new to the chronological records of man's history. The annals of history provides numberless accounts of scientists who have been persecuted in the name of religion and forced with horrible tortures to deny their discoveries. A recent trend, changes the swing of the pendulum the other way, forcing religion now to adapt its theological universe to the realities uncovered by science.

The steady, victorious advance of science has tended not only to technologize but also to secularize the life of humanity. This has proved an advantage from one point of view, in that it has freed man's mind and man's creative activities from the chains and trammels of religious creed and tradition. Human beings are no longer burned at the stake for proclaiming scientific truth.

The secularization of all human activities and affairs on the planet has been fraught also with tragic consequences. Man is a being, differentiated from the animal, with capacity for spiritual perception and spiritual motivation. Science, detouring the life of humanity from these precious and necessary goals, has almost completely stultified man's spiritual powers, so far as daily living is concerned. And despite all the efforts of religionists to infuse life with spiritual zeal and understanding, science continues to increase its devastating hold upon the human mind and soul.

To recapture the imagination and character of man, religion must first make terms with science. Not by surrendering to science one jot of truth or principle, but by restating spiritual truth in terms compatible with the known and accepted truths of science. There must be a reconciliation between science and religion. Both are needed by humanity.

" *'Ali', the son-in-law of Muhammad, said: 'That which is in conformity with science is also in conformity with religion'. Whatever the intelligence of man cannot understand, religion ought not to accept. Religion and Science walk hand in hand and any religion contrary to science is not the truth.*" – Abdu'l-Baha

Both Religion and Science are approaches to truth, and can not be in opposition. Scientists and Priests may disagree, and either may be wrong, but Science, which is knowledge of the universe, can not be opposed to Religion, which is the art of living.

"*Put all your beliefs into harmony with science, there can be no opposition, for truth is one. When religion, shorn of its superstitions, traditions and unintelligent dogmas, shows its conformity with science, then will there be a great unifying, cleansing force in the world, which will sweep before it all wars, disagreements, discord and struggles, and then will mankind be united in the power of the Love of God.*" – Abdu'l Baha

Abdu'l Baha says that science and religion are two wings upon which civilization must fly. We may think of science as one wing and religion as the other. A bird needs two wings for flight, one alone would be useless. Any religion that contradicts science, or that is opposed to it, is only ignorance. Religion which consists only of rites and ceremonies of prejudice is not the truth. Much of the discord and disunion of the world is created by these man-made oppositions and contradictions. If religion were in harmony with science, much of the hatred and bitterness now bringing misery to the human race would be at an end.

"*Weigh carefully in the balance of reason and science everything that is presented to you as religion. If it passes this test, then accept it, for it is Truth. If, however, it does not so conform, then reject it, for it is ignorance. It is impossible for Religion to be contrary to science, even though some intellects are too weak or too immature to understand truth.*" – Abdu'l Baha

"*Perfect harmony between religion and science is the 'sine qua non' of the higher life for humanity. When that is achieved, and every child is trained not only in the study of the sciences and arts, but equally in love to all man-kind and in radiant acquiescence to the will of God as revealed in the progress of evolution; the Prophets, then and not till then, shall the Kingdom of God come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven; then and not till then shall the Most Great Peace shed its blessing on the world.*" – J.E. Esslemont

Once harmony is established between Science and Religion, the essence of reality will be recognized among the peoples of the planet. Mankind has for ages fantasized his way through existence, without regard to any recognizable reality. So much has been lost in wasted effort, when there awaited the unveiling of eternal glory.

Indeed there are two sides to every item or issue, if they oppose one another there is no harmony or unity, however, if they agree and are supportive, then a harmony of truth is established. If Religion possesses a truth, and Science is able to establish its foundation, a true essence of harmony and truth has become a reality, unto which all of humanity will turn their hearts.

6. The Equality of Men and Women

The Sixth Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*The Equality of Men and Women.*"

"They must be as the two wings of the soul, each equally developed. The sixth foundation stone, the Sardonyx, is a stone of two layers, one white and one red, symbolical of the two in one who unitedly further the progress of mankind." – Abdu'l-Baha

Considering the time and place in which Baha'u'llah proclaimed his principles, this one, the equality of men and women, was probably the most revolutionary and startling of them all. And yet it is now the most universally accepted, outwardly at least. Feminine emancipation has swept the world, both West and East, and women have proved their capacity to enter the professions, trades, and arts, on an equal footing with men. But this is only a superficial equality, concessions extorted from a man's world. Full psychic equality is not yet; men are unwilling to recognize it, and women, owing to thousands of years of inferior education and position, are unable to accept it.

"*The world of humanity has two wings; one is woman and the other man. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of woman becomes equal to the world of man in the acquisition of virtues and perfection's, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be.*" – Abdu'l Baha

Men and women are not the same, they have different functions. But these functions are complementary and both must be equal for a perfect result. In psychological terms we say there are two principles, Logos the male, and Eros the female. So far, Logos, the active, achieving principle has been dominant in world affairs. Eros, the principle which brings people into relatedness and maintains harmony, has been in the background or confined to the family. But its power and value is unconsciously recognized in the fact that the woman, the hostess, is the important person at a social gathering, the mother in the home. When this force is released into all human affairs, it will accomplish its work between nations, in the human family. The excesses to which women have been lead by their sudden and-swift emancipation, their attempts to achieve

equality through sacrifice of femininity, or through outdoing men in masculine activities, offer no standard of judgment for a truly mature sex.

Equality of women does not mean that they must make better males than men, but that they must achieve true maturity of soul. The same obligation rests upon men.

Baha'u'llah declared the equality of men and women, expressed through equal responsibilities and equal rights and privileges. And since that declaration, the bonds by which women have been bound for ages have been breaking, and women have rapidly been securing her rightful place as the equal and partner of man.

"*Women must go on advancing; they must extend their knowledge of science, literature, history, for the perfection of humanity. Erelong they will receive their Rights. Men will see women in earnest, bearing themselves with dignity, improving the civil and political life, opposed to warfare, demanding suffrage and equal opportunities. I expect to see you advance in all phases of life; then will your brows be crowned with the diadem of eternal glory*." – Abdu'l Baha

Of great importance is that women should be regarded as the total equals of men. It is their right to enjoy all privileges, an equal education and equal opportunities just as men do. Bringing about the emancipation of women relies on universal education. Girls are to receive as good an education as boys. In fact, the education of girls is of greater importance than that of boys. In time girls will become mothers, and as mothers, they will be the first teachers of the next generation.

"*Children are like green and tender branches; if the early training is right they grow straight, and if it is wrong they grow crooked; and to the end of their lives they are affected by the training of their earliest years. How important, then, that girls should be well and wisely educated!*" – Abdu'l Baha

Equality is a virtue of right and of principle among the foundation of God's Teachings. No longer are women held back from their full powerful potency of spiritual endowment. It is incumbent upon men to recognize women as their equal and as their partner in the New World Order. Oneness, Unity, and harmony among mankind can not be achieved unless there is equality between men and women. The oneness of mankind is essential for world harmony and peace, as the common foundation of racial origins be the same, this hold true to the origins of woman and man, we are all of God's creation, There are no second class citizens in the Kingdom of God.

"*Humanity is like a bird with two wings- the one is male, the other female. Unless both wings are strong and impelled by some common force, the bird cannot fly heavenwards. According to the spirit of this age, women must advance and fulfill their mission in all departments of life, becoming equal to men, they must be on the same level as men and enjoy equal rights. This is my earnest prayer and it is one of the fundamental principles of Baha'u'llah*." – Abdu'l Baha

7. Universal Peace

The Seventh Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*Universal Peace.*"

The eighth foundation stone, the Beryl, is greenish-blue; somewhat like the ocean wave as it mounts toward its crest; the blue of the faith and loyalty toward our brother man, the green of humility and unity, the harmonious blending into one symmetrical whole, like a beautiful bouquet of flowers. This, established in the hearts of man, will also establish Universal Peace.

Abdu'l Baha

The world longs for peace. But none of its respective nations, not even America is prepared to relinquish nationalism to the extent which Baha'u'llah pointed out would be necessary in an effective world organization.

Two mandatory considerations are still withheld from fulfillment in the United Nations. The first is the relinquishment of national sovereignty to the point of accepting without right of veto the adjudications of a world court. The second inevitable requirement of stable peace is national disarmament down to the point of internal security only, and the establishment of an international police force. The world is not yet ready for these two momentous steps. Nor can they be accomplished without due caution.

World peace is not merely a matter to be arranged between governments by treaties. It is the concern of every citizen of this one-world home of humanity. This is the point of exercising our free will to avoid that nullification of progress, that race annihilation that threatens us.

"*The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Baha'u'llah, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded.*" – Baha'u'llah

The abolition of war is to be only the first step in a colossal plan for a world organized in effective unity. Fully functioning as a federated unit, and dedicated to the establishment of a universal civilization founded on justice and good will. Expressing itself in forms of prosperity, beauty, and joy-of-living more glorious than even the world's great poets and seers have envisioned and conceived.

The miracle of the rapid growth of a will-to-peace throughout the world is directly concomitant with the development of new and terrifying death-dealing military weapons. War on the ground had always been tragically destructive. But war from the air, on the scale recently attained, is too devastating for humanity to endure.

"*.... instrumentations of warfare would become so deadly and all-destructive as to eventually compel humanity to desist from war entirely.*" – Baha'u'llah

There exists today that which did not exist in 1870, therefore the world, in 1870, gave little heed to the proclamations of Baha'u'llah. It overlooked one item which would eventually induce a desperate search for permanent peace, changing world events. These world events have proved the truth of this prognostication. Sadly enough, it is not idealism which is at last inducing humanity to outlaw war. It is not the moral sense but the fear of race annihilation which under entirely new and unexpected conditions, forces governments to

entertain new and unexpected convictions and goals. Human nature may not greatly change, as the cynics maintain. But the directives of human activity often change, and never are they more potently active than today. So that now there exists a universal will to avoid war which is equivalent to a universal will-to-peace.

"*Peace is not something we fall into because we react against war. Peace is a positive achievement involving an organized world community of law and order which we must want so much that we are willing to pay the full price it costs.*" – Harry Emerson Fosdick

The world order of Baha'u'llah is a goal which we can visualize in outline, and towards which we may strive. It is no magic millennium which will result from some particular political or economic action. It is founded on the spiritual concept of the oneness of mankind and raises a structure by which this unity may be preserved and developed. "The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens" is its principle.

8. Universal Compulsory Education

The Eighth Basic Baha'i Principle is:
"*Universal Compulsory Education*."

The ninth foundation stone, the Topaz, the glory of the sun, is symbolical of the light of knowledge and the glory of wisdom, which universal education will establish in the world when the golden Topaz, the light of the teachings of Baha'u'llah, is understood and lived.

Abdu'l Baha

Education is one of the most important factors in the evolution of humanity. Only one department of life is more potent, and that is religion. In epochs characterized by religious zeal and piety, religion and education work hand in hand. Together they constitute a single unifying, inspirational, guiding force which coordinates all human thought and expression within a traditionally accepted pattern. In such periods education serves what is in reality its most basic purpose, the training of character. Education not change characters, which are all different, but it assist them to develop to their utmost capacity.

"*The Prophets also acknowledge this opinion, to wit: That education hath a great effect upon the human race, but they declare that minds and comprehension's are originally different. And this matter is self-evident; it cannot be refuted. we see that certain children of the same age, nativity and from the same household, under the tutor ship of one teacher, differ in their minds and comprehension's. No matter how much the shell is polished, it can never become the radiant pearl. The balance stone will not become the world illumining gem.... That is to say, training doth not change the Human substance, but it produces a marvelous effect. By this effective power all that is registered, in latency, of virtues and capacities in the human reality will be revealed. It is for this reason that, in this new cycle, education and training are recorded in the Books of God as obligatory and not voluntary*." – Abdu' Baha

Modern civilization has been stirred to its depths by this new principle. Compulsory education for children, and the extension of education facilities for adults, have become a new primary policy of government. Nations which deliberately seek to restrict the independence of mind and spirit among their citizens, by that very policy have aroused revolution within and suspicion and fear outside their boundaries. Baha'u'llah had two great world aims, to build up a spiritually regenerate humanity, and to establish a functionally united world. To both of these aims education is intrinsic.

Baha'u'llah gave great prominence to education in delineating the structure of the future World Society. It is chiefly through educative influences that we must build up an ideology and loyalty consecrated to the goal of world peace. Only through education of youth and adult can the adverse and chaotic elements which now compose human society be guided and fused into that dynamically functioning world unity which we now have come to believe is the keystone of the arch of human progress.

"*Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess*." – Baha'u'llah

Literacy is only the barest foundations for education, not education itself. First and foremost, as a means towards world unity and world-federation, youth must be trained in wider and nobler values than at present. The loyalties to family, tribe, clan, and nation which have gradually evolved in human society are not enough to satisfy the wider horizons and needs of today. There must be a new and more universal loyalty to mankind itself as a whole, a "one -world" zeal and dedication. Loves of family, of clan, of nation are praiseworthy and

will continue to hold their legitimate place in the social pattern. But unless and until a greater love is bred in humans, love of one's world, a United Nations can not successfully function.

Conversely, it may be stated that no system of education in the future will satisfactorily spiritualize its curriculum until it is able to harmonize religion with science. Baha'u'llah made it one of the major principles of the New World Order. He envisaged, this harmonization taking place, and the spiritual factors of human existence being taught in a scientific way.

A deep respect for law will be engendered in each citizen by inculcation of spiritual values. In fact, law it-self rests ultimately upon spiritual foundations. Had we no spiritual training we should be unaware of Justices, Mercy and Wisdom. Our juvenile delinquency problem, our divorce problem, our crime problem, all witness the lack of stress in spiritual character building in our educational systems. Through education by such spiritual training, a character would be formed more capable of meeting the strains and temptations of life. Becoming more resolute in enterprise, more fertile in creative imagination, more responsible to the calls of duty, more worthy and capable as a true citizen of world democracy.

We must promote worldly, by every means within our power, the material as well as spiritual enlightenment of the youth. The means for the education of children, to provide the best means for their progress and development, is incumbent upon the world of mankind. It becomes not only progress towards world unity, but is the brightest outlook for the future generations of children. They shall possess a common knowledge of all things, illiteracy shall disappear, moral and spiritual worthiness strengthened, and oneness achieved through the education of all.

Baha’u’llah

Baha’u’llah – The Divine Educator

The Life of Baha’u’llah

April of 1863 is marked in the history as a dark period as the men and women, young and old, from all walks of life, gathered on the thoroughfare leading to the banks of the River Tigris in Baghdad to bid a tearful farewell to the One Who had become their friend, their comforter and their guide.

Mirza Husayn Ali—known as Baha’u’llah—was being banished from their midst. Being a prominent and an ardent follower of Bab, he worked very hard such that his teachings had spread through Persia over 2 decades. His sacrifice ended in exile.

But despair would soon be transformed into hope: Before leaving the environs of Baghdad, Baha’u’llah would announce to His companions what many of them had already suspected—that He was the great Divine Educator heralded by the Bab, the initiator of a new era in history in which the tyrannies and injustices of the past would give way to a world of peace and justice: an embodiment of the principle of the oneness of humankind.

The “Divine Springtime,” He would unequivocally proclaim, had arrived.

Early life

He was born in Tehran, Iran on 12 November, 1817. Mirza Husayn Ali enjoyed all the advantages conferred by noble birth. From a very early age, He displayed extraordinary knowledge and wisdom.

As a young man, rather than pursuing a career in government service like His father, Mirza Husayn Ali chose to devote His energies to the care of the poor. He showed no interest in seeking position or prominence. He led a very humble life.

After accepting Bab, the life of Mirza Husayn changed entirely. Although They never met in person, from the moment Mirza Husayn Ali heard of the Bab’s message, He declared His wholehearted belief in it and put all of His energy and influence into promoting it. His service to poor ones was now embalmed with the spirituality and Godwariness.

In 1848, a significant gathering of the Bab’s followers took place in a village in the northeast of Iran named Badasht. Mirza Husayn Ali played a key role in the proceedings of Badasht, which attested the independent character of the new religion. From this time onwards, Mirza Husayn Ali was known as Baha’u’llah, meaning the “Glory of God” in Arabic.

As the community of the Bab’s followers grew, it also provoked the fierce opposition from the regime. Thousands and thousands of Bab’s follower were subjected to the most cruel and barbaric treatment by the regime, and many of them were put to death. When three hundred Babis sought refuge in a deserted shrine called the fort of Shaykh Tabarsi, Baha’u’llah set out to join other Babis, but He was prevented from reaching His destination.

In 1850, the Bab was publicly executed in Tabriz. Majority of the Bab’s leading supporters were killed, and it soon became evident that Baha’u’llah was the only One to Whom the remaining Babis could turn. His level of spirituality and leadership was palpable.

Revelation

In 1852, Baha'u'llah was falsely charged in an attempt on the life of Nasiruddin Shah, the King of Iran. When the warrant was issued, He Himself set out to face His accusers, this astonished those who were charged with arresting Him. They conducted Him, barefoot and in chains, through teeming streets to a notorious subterranean dungeon of Chihrigh, known as the "Black Pit."

The dungeon was pitch dark and had once been the reservoir for a public bath. Within its walls, prisoners languished in the cold and unhealthy air, stinky smell clamped together by an unbearably heavy chain that left its mark on Baha'u'llah's body for the rest of His life.

It was in these difficult circumstances that the rarest and most cherished of the events was once again played out: a mortal man, outwardly human in every respect, was chosen by God to bring to humanity a new message.

This experience of Divine Revelation, touched on only indirectly in surviving accounts of the lives of Moses, Christ, and Muhammad, is illustrated in Baha'u'llah's own words: "During the days I lay in the prison of Tihran, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitateth itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain…At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear."

Exile to Baghdad

After four months of intense sufferings and torture, Baha'u'llah—now ill and utterly exhausted—was released from the prison and exiled forever from His native Iran. He and his family were sent to Baghdad. There, the remaining followers of the Bab increasingly turned to Baha'u'llah for moral and spiritual guidance. The nobility of His character, the wisdom of His counsel, the humility he displayed, the kindness that He showered upon all and the increasing evidences of superhuman greatness in Him, revived the downtrodden community.

As Baha'u'llah emerged as the leader of the community of the Bab's followers, it aroused intense jealousy from Mirza Yahya, His ambitious, younger half-brother. Mirza Yahya made several shameless efforts to defame & slander Baha'u'llah's character and sow seeds of suspicion and doubt among His companions. In order to avoid tension due to this, Baha'u'llah retired to the mountains of Kurdistan, where He remained for two years, reflecting on His divine purpose of spreading the message. In the mountains of Sulaymaniyyah during these 2 years, Baha'u'llah continued his mission and sowed the seeds of Baha'i faith which is evident today in the form of believers in Sulaymaniyyah. This period of His life resembled of Moses' withdrawal to Mount Sinai, Christ's days in the wilderness, and Muhammad's retreat in the Arabian hills.

Yet even in this remote region, Baha'u'llah's fame spread very rampantly. People heard that a man of extraordinary wisdom and eloquence was to be found there. When such stories reached Baghdad, the Babís, guessing Baha'u'llah's identity, dispatched a mission to implore Him to return.

Residing once more in Baghdad, Baha'u'llah reinvigorated the Bab's followers; the stature of the community grew and His reputation spread ever further. He composed three of His most renowned works at this time—the Hidden Words, the Seven Valleys and the Book of Certitude (Kitab-i-Iqán). While Baha'u'llah's writings alluded to His station, it was not yet the time for a public announcement.

As Baha'u'llah's fame spread, it was obvious that the envy and malice of some of the clergy was rekindled. Representations were made to the Shah of Iran to ask the Ottoman Sultan to remove Baha'u'llah further from the Iranian border. A second banishment was decreed.

At the end of April 1863, shortly before leaving the environs of Baghdad for Istanbul (known as

Constantinople in the English language of the time), Baha'u'llah and His companions resided for twelve days in a garden which He named Ridvan, meaning "Paradise". On the banks of the River Tigris, Baha'u'llah declared Himself to be the One heralded by the Bab—God's Messenger to the age of humanity's collective maturity, foretold in all the world's scriptures. Thousands of His lovers and admirers gathered in Ridvan and met Him. They heard the message of God from the Man of God Himself.

Further banishments

Three months after departing Baghdad, Baha'u'llah and His fellow exiles reached Constantinople. They remained there for just four months before a further banishment took them to Edirne (Adrianople), a gruelling journey undertaken during the coldest of winters. In Adrianople, their accommodation failed to protect them from the bitter temperatures.

Baha'u'llah referred to Adrianople as the "remote prison." Yet despite the inhospitable conditions under which the exiles were forced to live, inspired verses continued to flow from Baha'u'llah's pen, and His message reached as far away as Egypt and India.

During this period Mirza Yahya, the jealous half-brother of Baha'u'llah, contrived to poison Him. This tragic episode left Baha'u'llah with a tremor that showed in His handwriting to the end of His life.

Beginning in September 1867, Baha'u'llah wrote a series of letters to the leaders and rulers of various nations inviting them to the message of God. In these prescient writings, He openly proclaimed His station, speaking of the dawn of a new age. But first, He warned, there would be catastrophic upheavals in the world's political and social order. He summoned the world's leaders to uphold justice and called upon them to convene an assembly where they would meet and put an end to war. He said that only by acting collectively, could a lasting peace be established. His warnings fell upon deaf ears.

Continued agitation from Baha'u'llah's detractors caused the Ottoman government to banish Him one final time, to its most notorious penal colony. Arriving in the Mediterranean prison city of 'Akká on 31 August 1868, Baha'u'llah was to spend the rest of His life in the fortified city and its environs.

Confined to a prison for more than two years, He and His companions were later moved to a cramped house within the city's walls. Little by little, the moral character of the Baha'is—particularly Baha'u'llah's eldest son, Abdu'l Baha—softened the hearts of their jailers, and penetrated the bigotry and indifference of Akka's residents. As in Baghdad and Adrianople, the nobility of Baha'u'llah's character gradually won the admiration of the community at large, including some of its leaders.

In Akka, Baha'u'llah revealed His most important work, the Kitab-i-Aqdas (the Most Holy Book), in which He outlined the essential laws and principles of His Faith, and established the foundations for a global administrative order.

Final years

In the late 1870s, Baha'u'llah—while still a prisoner—was granted some freedom to move outside of the city's walls, allowing His followers to meet with Him in relative peace. In April 1890, Professor Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge University met Baha'u'llah at the mansion near Akka where He had taken up residence. Prof Browne made notes of his discussion with Baha'u'llah.

Browne wrote of their meeting: "The face of Him on Whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow…No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain."

Baha'u'llah passed away on 29 May, 1892. In His will, He designated Abdu'l Baha as His successor and Head of the Baha'i Faith — the first time in history that the Founder of a world religion had named his successor in a written irrefutable text. This choice of a successor is a central provision of what is known as the "Covenant of Baha'u'llah," enabling the Baha'i community to remain united for all time. Abdul Baha is thus known as the Centre of the Covenant.

Teachings of Baha'u'llah

The following texts of Baha'u'llah, concerning the return of the soul or the reincarnation, are taken from His utterances, entitled the "Sacred Tablet:"

"Regarding thy question about the 'return,' know thou that the 'return' is like unto the 'beginning (the first incarnation), for as thou seest the 'beginning, likewise see thou the 'return' and be of those who can see. That thou may'st have clear understanding, see thou the 'beginning' identical with the 'return and the 'return' identical with the 'beginning.'

"Know thou that all things in all times, by the command of thy God the Almighty, 'begin' and 'return. But the return which is the purpose of God and which was written in His Holy and Sacred Tablet, and which foretold His servants concerning it, is the 'return' of the creatures at the Day of Resurrection. This is the cause of the 'return as thou hast seen in the days of God, and wast of those who testify. By His command this 'return' is to be recognized of those whom He wisheth to be known. Verily, He is the One who doeth what He desireth. Look thou not regarding this position into limitations and names. See thou when the Point of Beyan appeared (the Bab, glory be to him), how he decided that the one who believed first was Mohammed, the Messenger of God.

"Is it meet for anyone to object, saying, this man is a Persian and Mohammed was an Arab, or, the name of this one is Huseyn and the name of the other was Mohammed? By the Self of God the Most High, No!

"Know thou that at the Day of the Appearance everything [man], with the exception of God, must return and all are on the same level, though they are of the high and of the low. No one can recognize the 'return of anyone, save after its declaration by the command of God. Verily, He declareth whom He wisheth. But after the imparting of the Word of God to the creatures he, whosoever listeneth and believeth, would be considered of the highest of the creatures, even though he were of those who carry ashes; and he, whosoever rejecteth it, is of the lowest of the creatures, even though the people should consider him as a redeemer, and even though he has all the Material and Spiritual instructions."

IN THE NAME OF HIM WHO IS SEATED UPON THE THRONE.

This tablet hath descended from the Presence of God, the Ruler of the Names, to the people of Baha, who speak not save that which hath been uttered by the Tongue of Might and Power, and who follow not every lying claimer. These are they who have drank of the wine of faithfulness from the hands of the Providence o£ their God the Mighty, Chosen. Ye shall hear the voice of a croaker; heed ye him not. Leave him alone and advance toward the Kublah (Center) of all horizons. All preceding Manifestations were ended in this Manifestation, which hath appeared in truth; and all preceding lights have merged into this horizon, from which the Sun of Might and Glory hath dawned. Blessed is the soul which educateth the creatures in accordance with the commandments of God which have been written in the Books and Tablets.

Say: If every day a Manifestation were to appear the command of God would have no effect in the cities and countries. This is a Manifestation, the like unto which shall manifest Himself but once in five hundred thousand years. Thus have we uncovered the veil and have lifted up the curtains. Blessed is he who knoweth the purpose of God, for he who comprehendeth it, his heart shall rejoice and his steadfastness in the Cause of God would be in such wise that none in the universe can lead him astray. In this tablet we have uncovered a secret of the Mysteries of this Appearance and have secluded that which ought to be hidden; otherwise, the clamour of the wicked would be raised up. By God the truth is; none knoweth this save the one to whom it was decreed. If anyone should attain the fragrances of this Garment (Manifestation) he would be attracted in such wise that he would be elevated above the contingent worlds. Should we fully explain what we have

uttered in this tablet, pens and ink would not suffice. Having this unimaginable and Supreme State, yet thou nearest what those who are led ‘ astray say against Him. We have unveiled for thee one of the secrets as a favor upon thee, that thou mightest thank thy Lord the Mighty, the All-Wise.

Oh, My Name, we have uttered in most of the tablets that this Cause is Great and Great, yet none hath comprehended its Greatness, but those whom thy God the Mighty, the Generous, hath chosen. We have abandoned the people of superstitions in the wilderness of selfishness and lust, occupying themselves with that which they have of imaginations. Verily, thy God is Self-Subsistent and Supreme. The Standard of “There is no God but He,” hath been raised up; still they speak that which they have heard from the vile and worthless. We hereby give thee tidings of the Word which appeared in the Garment of Splendor between the earths and the Heavens.

Say: Praise be to Thee, 0 Thou whose bounty hath surrounded me and hast promised me with such a promise not before vouchsafed to the righteous. Enow thou that the, Tablet of Ahkam (commandments) hath descended from the Rising Place of Inspiration of thy God, and we, in truth, will send it as a command from Our Presence. Verily, thy God is the Exalted, the Chosen. We have uttered for thet a, tablet before this one and have sent it from another place, that thou mightest ascertain that the promise of God hath preceded every other promise. We ask God to help thee in [spreading His Cause and to confirm thee in. that which He wisheth and desireth in all times. Verily, the Beha is upon thee and upon those who spoke with what was uttered by the Tongue of Knowledge in the contingent world; that there is no God but He, the Powerful, the Exalted, the One, the Single, the Supreme and the Mighty.

My greetings are upon my friends, who believed in God the Mighty, the One.

(Received from Akka, October, 1900.)

HE IS EXALTED ABOVE ALL THOSE WHO ARE UPON EARTH AND IN THE HEAVEN.

Still the Voice of God is ascending and the Light of His Appearance from the horizon of the Mount is shining and reflecting; yet the clouds of darkness shall come after this light, and the mists of hatred shall follow. In those days the rays of The Sun of Truth shall be stopped from shining, but at last its light shall victoriously reappear, the Cause of God shall spread and His Command shall be exalted. We command the followers of El Hack (Glory be to Him) to be faithful, pious and to do that which will contribute to the progress of the world and to the elevation of the Word of God.

Oh, people of God, it is meet for you to only display the exaltation of God by making your actions, movements and steadfastness as mirrors of His Will. Always “This Oppressed One” commands the seekers and the friends to do that which will cause development and elevation. Every existing atom beareth witness that He seeketh naught for Himself.

Praise thou “The Ancient of Days,” for He mentioned thee while He was surrounded and harassed by the attacks of nations.

We ask God to sustain thee and the people of that country, to confirm you in praising and mentioning Him, and to grant unto you the Wisdom and Knowledge. Verily, there is no God but He, the One, the Commander, the Ruler, the Mighty and the Generous.

Consult the council, and do thou according to its behests, for in numerous tablets have we commanded all to establish the council. We ask God to help thee and His people to do what He wisheth and desireth, and we ask Him to pardon thy parents and all those who have returned unto Him, for He is the Most Merciful and the Creator of those who are in the Heavens and upon the earth.

IN MY NAME, WHICH SPEAKETH IN THE KINGDOM OF KNOWLEDGE.

A remembrance hath been issued from Our Presence to him who hath believed in the One, the All-Knowing, and hath advanced toward the Center of Creation and hath confessed that which the Tongue of Might hath uttered. “The Kingdom is to God the Lord of the Supreme Throne.”

Verily, El BEHA mentioned thee at the time when the lamentations and sorrows of His heart were great, because of what the hands of the tyrants had wrought against Him. Verily, the croaker hath uttered his evil voice and the tyrant hath risen for oppression.

My Supreme Pen beareth witness to this: Verily, it informeth you concerning what hath been committed against the Perfection, the Ancient of Days, by the hosts of infidels who in appearance do move about Him; but the attitude of their innermost is known to God, the Lord of the Lofty Throne. By the Life of God, this Book is lamenting and the Supreme Pen is weeping and crying out: “Oh, people, fear God and deny ye not Him, who came from the Heaven of Bounty with a Power which vanquisheth all those who are in the heavens and upon the earth.” As thou hearest the Voice at once direct thy face toward God and say: “The Splendour be to Thee, o Lord of all the worlds, for Thou hast remembered me in the prison at Acre, whilst Thou wast amongst the hands of those who cast away Thy Covenant and Faith and disbelieved Thy Word, which surrounded those who exist in the past and in the future.”

El BEHA be upon thee and upon everyone who is steadfast and faithful!

HE IS THE SUPREME, THE MOST HIGH.

The paper was seen and its contents understood. Verily, it is the truth that those who are faithful in the Path of God are few. In this present time the movement of the period of tradition is to be renewed. Shortly many shall follow their worldly lusts, abandoning the Essence of Piety and occupying themselves with that which is naught.

Verily, they shall neglect the Aim of the Worlds. This gentle breeze which is breathing from the Spiritual Rizwan shall be stilled and the Morning of Truth shall be exchanged for the evening of falsity. If possible, then, it is meet to shut the eye of criticism and open that of affection; otherwise, cursing and execration, hatred and enmity, shall be renewed as in the past times. Now, this condition exists, yet with loving kindness we treat them. This Epistle is sent to the Followers of Baha’u’llah by Muhammed Husein Shirazi.

In the year 1360 A. H. (1844 A. D.) a certain young man appeared in Persia, whose original name was Ali-Muhammed, but as he claimed in the beginning of his career that he was the gate of knowledge, he was called the “Bab” (gate) and his followers “Babists.”

Finally he declared himself to be the one whose appearance was expected by Islam, called by the Shiites “Ckaim” and by the Sunnites “Mahdi.” From the commencement of his work his great subject was the glad tidings of the approaching event, the greatest Manifestation of the Promised and Generous One. He mentioned Him in his utterances with supreme deference, just as John the Baptist spoke about the appearance of Jesus Christ: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”—St. Matthew, 3-11.

Sheik Ahmad-al-Ahsai, a great, learned man, who appeared in the thirteenth century A. H., had foretold the coming of the “Bab” and taught his disciples and the people to expect the coming of the “Ckaim” at any time. After the death of this Sheik one of his disciples, Haji Seyyid Kazim- el-Reshti, who was as profound a student as his master, took his position and at once began to teach and preach openly the approaching appearance of the “Ckaim.” He gave many explanations of the sayings and teachings of his Sheik concerning

that appearance. On his deathbed he urged his disciples to start at once in search of the promised One. These two learned doctors have written many things on this subject which we cannot insert in this brief account.

When the "Bab" declared himself in the city of Shiraz, the capital of Fars, one of the disciples of the Sheik, Seyyid Kazim, and the oldest one of those who were searching for the Promised One, was of the first to believe in the "Bab" and embrace the new faith. Many theological doctors learned men and people of all classes gathered around the "Bab," believed in him, and were deeply stirred by his wonderful thought and knowledge. He gave to them the glad tidings of the coming of the Greatest Manifestation. He frequently mentioned in his writings the attributes of "Him whom God shall manifest"—His Great Appearance—and emphasized the importance of His Manifestation. And, although he claimed for himself the highest state of spirituality, yet he considered himself naught and as a poor servant in comparison with the aforesaid One. The "Bab" did not definitely appoint the time for the Manifestation of the Father. Sometimes he mentioned a fixed time, and then again he spoke of Him as if He were present, saying: "All is in His hand; if He so desireth, He may even now declare Himself."

He frequently said that His Appearance might take place either in the ninth year or the nineteenth—that is to say, 1269 A. H. (1853 A. D.), or 1280 A. H. (1863 A. D.). The "Bab" continued to give these glad tidings to the people from the beginning of his mission until he was executed in the city of Tabreez, the capital of Atherbijan, in 1266 A. H., on the 28th day of Shaban—that is, 1850 A. D., July 9th.

Three years later He whom the Babists expected appeared in His Name, El-Beha, declaring that he was the Promised One of the Scriptures. He manifested Himself to the Babists twice—once to a few of His followers in the ninth year after the first appearance of the "Bab;" the second time in the nineteenth year from the Bab, 1280 A. H. (1863 A.D.)-

[Note by Translator — His manifestation to the whole world, inviting the rulers and the great people of the earth to His spiritual banquet, "to eat and drink with the elect," was in 1284- A. H. (1867)]

Baha'u'llah, since He declared Himself, has conclusively proved from all Scriptures that He was the Promised One. He has uttered tablets and written epistles which attracted the hearts and refreshed the souls. The noble life he lived astonished and impressed the people, and His fame spread to all countries. All who knew Him acknowledged His Supremacy and were awed by the loftiness and greatness of His character.

His claim that He was the Promised One of the Holy Scriptures and that His Appearance was the Greatest, and that it will take place only once in every five hundred thousand years, may be found in His many writings. He also proved that a higher virtue and greater grace distinguished His day. The following quotations from the prophecies in the Holy Books prove the truth of His claim:

"Psalm 24, 7-10. Lift up your heads, 0 ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. (8.) Who is this King of Glory? The Lord Strong and Mighty, the Lord Mighty in Battle. (9.) Lift up your heads, 0 ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. (10.) Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. Selah.

"Isaiah, 4—2. In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious and the fruits of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

Also, Psalm 50, 1-3; Psalm 108, 10.

"Baha'u'llah called Himself 'the Branch' in many off His Tablets, and I have seen some of them in His own handwriting.

"Isaiah 28, 5-6; Isaiah 33, 16. He shall dwell on high, His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks;

bread shall be given Him; His waters shall be sure.

“Isaiah 35, 1-2. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and re]oice, even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the Excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the Excellency of our God.

“Isaiah 40, 3-5. The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our Lord. Every valley shall be; exalted and every mountain and hill shall he made low; and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places : plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

“Isaiah 40, 6-10; Isaiah 62, 7-8. How beautiful upon’ the mountians are the feet of Him to bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that sayeth unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see, eye to i eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”

The seventh verse of the 52nd chapter of Isaiah is considered to be a prophecy concerning the Bab when he was imprisoned in the mountains and gave the tidings concerning the appearance of Baha’u’llah.

“Isaiah 62, 2-11; Isaiah 65, 17-18; Joel 2, 1-2. Blow ye the trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. Joel 2—3, 4, 10, 11, 31, 32; Joel 3—14, 17, 21; Amos 1—2; Micah 4—1, 2. But in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the ‘ hills; and the people shall flow into it. And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths, for the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Micah 4—3, 4, 5, 7; Nahum 1—15; Zachariah 2—10. Sing and rejoice, 0 daughter of Zion; for, lo! I come and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. Ziich. 6—12. And speak unto him, saying: Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord.”

Of His texts, in which He calls Himself “The Branch are the following in his own handwriting: “Hark, 0 people, to the voice of God through this Blessed Branch, the Hand of God, the Ruler, the Victorious, the Visible, the Invisible, the Known, who has planted in the Eternal Garden these words: ‘There is no God but I, the Exalted, the Self-Existing.’ ”

He also uttered the following verse, which was written in a letter sent to the wife of the Bab, who was named the “Leaf of Paradise:” “God has remembered the Leaf of Paradise, that she may hear the melodious voice of the Leaf of Eternity from this Branch, who sprang up in His name, El ABHA.”

Respecting the building of the Temple, there is a book called the “Book of the Temple,” written on a paper thus * * * and at its conclusion He gave the following text:

“And thus we built the temple with hands of Might and Power. Were ye of those who knew? This is the Temple of which ye were promised in the Book. It is meet for ye to advance to it, were ye of those who reason. Be just, 0 people of the earth; see ye not that this Temple is a better one than that which was built of clay? Advance to it, for thus ye are commanded by God, the Exalted, the Self-Existing”

“Zachariah 8—3. Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem and

Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of Hosts, the holy mountain. Zech. 9—9; Zech. 14-9; Malachi 3—1, 2. Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His Temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap:

"Malachi 4—5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

It is said that the messenger of the Covenant is the Bab, who gave tidings of the appearance of Baha'u'llah, took His Covenant and prepared the way before Him. He is Elijah the Prophet, who was mentioned in the 4th chapter of Malachi. Baha'u'llah plainly declared in many of His well-known tablets that the Bab was Elijah.

"St. John 14—26, 30; St. John 15—26; St. John 16—. 12-14; St. Matthew 23—39; St. Matthew 24; St. Matthew 25—31."

The teachings of Baha'u'llah are all based upon union and love, and command us to abandon hatred and strife. The fundamental principle of His creed is to stop religious disputes and to root out the enmity of faith. He expressly, taught the necessity for the cessation of religious wars and. the equal necessity for the consorting of all peoples, of all 'faiths, with pure love and spirituality. This is the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah. — (Isaiah 2—2-4.)

In His writings, Baha'u'llah uttered numerous texts emphasizing these great principles. They are full of significance, and those who hear them cannot but feel deeply impressed. They compel every just soul to testify to His Supreme benevolence. We shall quote some of them, in accordance with the necessity of our subject. One of the most important points asserted in his writings is that there cannot be a true Manifestation (a prophet) before the completion of a full thousand years from his appearance, and if anybody should claim to be a prophet no one ought to believe in him, even though he could utter the texts. For this reason, if every now and then other Manifestations should take place, confusion would follow and the Word of God would lose its effect and no good results could be attained therefrom. The Holy Law-Giver has in every Manifestation a Supreme infallibility. His command is the command of God. His words are the words of God, and no other besides Him has any such authority. Everyone should abide under His shadow, follow His commands, and be responsible for his sayings and actions according to His laws. He who rises after Him for the helping of His work must spread His Word and practice His commandments; and his position ought to be that of absolute servitude. He has no authority to change a single letter of the commandments contained in His Books. In His writings alone is to be found the true balance, the supreme test. In every ease those who differ must consult His Books for a decision. He ordered His followers to consult and study His utterances upon all occasions, and especially whenever they might differ upon some question after His departure.

Of His utterances are these: That His Sons are the finger-posts pointing toward Him, and the executors of His command. They are controlled by His laws, but have no power to change one letter of His commandments. They have the highest position among His followers; and all must honour and respect them, appreciate their position, and obey them, so long as they work in the Shadow of His Word and in proper servitude of His law. He gave utterance, in several epistles and tablets, to many admonitions for His people. He commanded them to live in concert and love each other, and to deal with people of all religions in a spirit of unity and friendliness.

One of the great events of His days is, that after His arrival at the prison of Acre He sent with one of His friends an epistle to the Shah of Persia. The bearer, who was in the prime of youth, delivered the letter to the

Shah while he was on a hunting expedition. In that epistle Baha'u'llah asked the Shah to call Him and the most learned doctors oil the empire together, in order to discuss His claim and the differences between His teaching and that of the Shiites— this meeting to be held in the presence of the Shah. This is considered a wonderful thing, for the Shah was a powerful one, and the doctors were all bitter enemies of Baha'u'llah, and at the same time their word was law to the Shiites, who submissively obeyed all their commands. Therefore, His request to hold this conference must be regarded as a conclusive proof of His sincerity and of His ability to substantiate His claims in every particular.

One of the strongest evidences which Baha'u'llah has embodied in some of His epistles as proof of His claim was the martyrdom of those followers of the new religion, who were so persecuted in His country, and although slaughtered in the cruellest manner, were faithful to the end. These tragedies resemble those which took place amongst the early Christians, but it is said that the people of our time are even more faithful and devoted, for some martyrs of our day have killed themselves with their own hands out of devotion to their Lord. Some of the murdered women and children displayed a devotion, the like of which has never been heard of in the past ages. We can but mention these events in this brief article, but should anyone desire to know the details, let him ask to see the Book of Martyrs.

It is a well-known fact that differences of thought, dissensions, have taken place in every religion that has appeared in this world, either in the day of the Law-Giver or after his departure. This is proved by the histories of past ages. It is an event which has always happened. In such cases the wise will judge the different thoughts by the just judge, the Book of the Law. They will approve of that which is in perfect accordance with it, and reject that which differs from its teachings, even though it came from a high source. For the true and only judge is the Book by which everything, every case and every thought must be justified.

Let us now proceed to give a short account of what happened after the departure of Baha'u'llah. His followers differed among themselves regarding very important questions in His teachings. Such dissensions have occurred in all ages, because those who have ambitious aims will at once, when they have the opportunity, begin to sow the seeds of corruption in the hearts of the people, and thus gain for themselves supremacy and riches. But to return to our subject. The oldest son of Baha'u'llah, Abbas Effendi, together with some relatives (not by blood) and other designing persons, have intrigued in a rather peculiar manner to gain personal benefits and the most absolute supremacy. But they found obstacles in their way, the greatest of them being the writings of Baha'u'llah, which are widely spread in many countries. These utterances contain that which will deprive them of authority, disappoint their hopes, and refute their claim. Another important obstacle is the three Branches and the family, for they will never agree to disobey even the slightest command contained in the books of Baha'u'llah. In short, Abbas Effendi claims the power of knowing the inner and a divine attitude, and explains this in different and ambiguous ways. Thus they have planted the seeds of doubt in the hearts of those who have not sufficient knowledge of the utterances of Baha'u'llah, and but little understanding of His teachings.

One of the seeds of corruption which he sowed in the hearts of many is his claim that he is the Manifestation of the Only Son of God—that is to say, the Lord Jesus Christ while all the Holy Books plainly prophecy of one Manifestation only—i.e., that of the Everlasting Father, the Eternal God. Abbas Effendi claimed this in order to induce Christians to accept him as sole authority. Indeed, he does not desire that the Supreme Position of the Father should be acknowledged. His policy is to please those people around him. After they come under his absolute control he will claim for himself every supreme attitude—that there is none beside him—as he has already done among his immediate followers. To keep these people in his power he has tried by every means to prevent them from reading the works of Baha'u'llah, which would show them plainly the falsity of his claims and teachings. These works would make them aware of the harm which has resulted in the past from holding to false doctrines, for they lead back to barbarism and have ever been a hindrance in the way of civilization, knowledge and science. Briefly, we may say that some people were seduced by his honed words

to believe in the truth of his claims and follow his teachings, which are full of superstition and distorted imagination. In the beginning the claims were not made openly, but merely hinted at vaguely, but when he and his supporters discovered that the wise among the believers did not oppose them and kept silent — this they did, fearing to start disturbance and dissension—they were encouraged and with extreme boldness showed forth their false pretensions. Then those who were wise, faithful and upright rose up in defence of the true faith given them by Baha'u'llah, and from the epistles of their Lord, clearly proved the strength and justice of the stand they had taken. Those who were trying to lay a foundation upon which to build their supremacy found that this uprising of the honest and sincere believers would be in the way of their interest. They knew that if their simple-minded followers were allowed to meet with the pure in the faith and discuss the differences they would be awakened to see the truth, for the proofs of the truth are from the striking words of their Lord, Baha'u'llah. Fearful of the result, Abbas Effendi has prevented and prohibited his followers from speaking to or associating with those who will not blindly obey him, and thus laid the foundation of enmity and revived the barbarian creed, that to associate with those of different faith is a cause of sin and uncleanness. Even now the party of the younger Branches and the family of Baha'u'llah still invite those people to follow the commands of their Lord—i.e., to associate with all in a spirit of friendliness and kindness. But the invitation is of no avail, tor they are getting worse and worse in their attitude of unfriendliness and enmity.

Books by Julie Chanler

From Gaslight to Dawn by Julie Chanler

Living Pictures. In the Great Drama of the 19th Century by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Julie Chanler

Brand, & Sohrab [libretto Max Brand, and Julie Chandler; Music Max Brand]

The Gate: Scenic Oratorio for Soli, Chorus, and Orchestra in Two Parts (19 Scenes). 61. New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1944

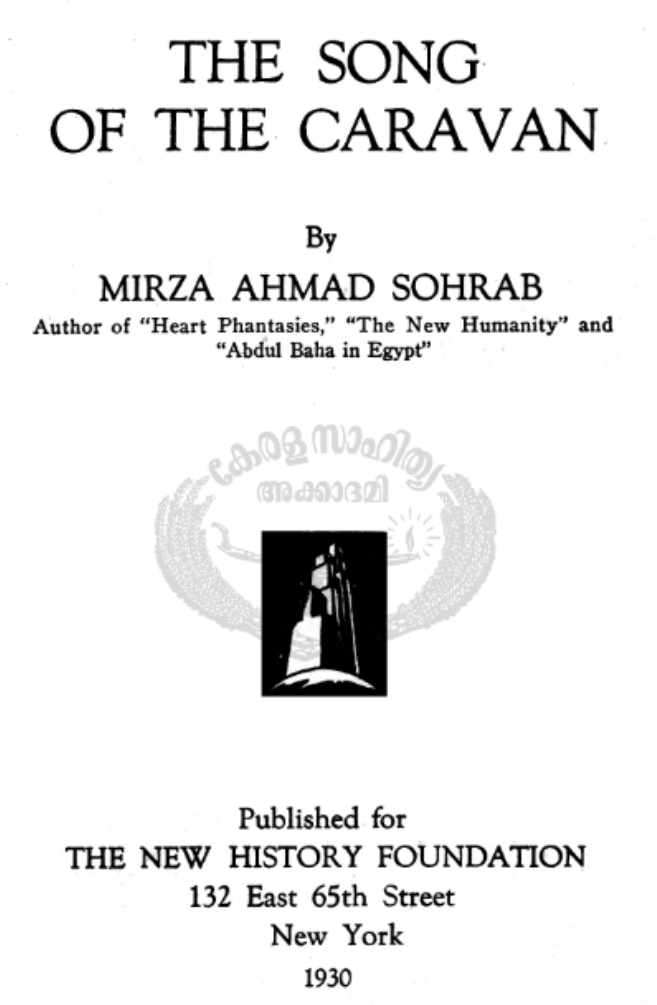
His Messengers Went Forth, by Julie Chanler, Illustrated by Olin Dows. Published by Coward-McCann, Inc. New York. Copyright 1948.

Ioas, Chanler, & Sohrab. Three Letters. 11 leaves. New York: Caravan of East and West, 1954

Seven Valleys, by Bahá'u'lláh (trans. Julie Chanler), 1936

Books by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

The Song of The Caravan by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab



THE SONG
OF THE CARAVAN

By

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

Author of "Heart Phantasies," "The New Humanity" and "Abdul Baha in Egypt"

Published for
THE NEW HISTORY FOUNDATION
132 East 65th Street
New York
1930

The Story of the Divine Plan by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

The Story of the Divine Plan

Taking place during and immediately following World War I

by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

The New History Foundation
132 East 65th street, New York 21, N. Y., U. S. A.

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[Inside Title page]

By the same author

Heart Phantasies

The New Humanity

Poems on Hollywood Bow (illustrated)

Abdul Baha in Egypt

Renaissance (a booklet)

Message to the Youth of Europe (a booklet)

The Song of the Caravan

Living Pictures (co-author, Julie Chanler)

Silver Sun (co-author, Julie Chanler)

Abdul Baha's Grandson By Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

ABDUL BAHA'S GRANDSON

Story of a Twentieth Century Excommunication

by

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

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The New History Foundation
132 East 65th Street
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Broken Silence by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

BROKEN SILENCE

The Story of Today's Struggle

for Religious Freedom

by

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

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NEW YORK, N. Y.

1942

Abdu'l Baha in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

ABDUL BAHA
IN EGYPT

By
MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB
Author of "The New Humanity and
"Heart Fantasies"

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THESE RECORDS
OF THE PERFECT LIFE
OF ABDUL BAHA
ARE DEDICATED
TO HIS EVER-PRESENT SPIRIT

FORWARD

Around the great figures of the Prophets in all ages have been woven stories and records, often in the remote past clouded by myth and allegory, which nevertheless, constitute a witness to the light.

In this age when the influence of Baha-Ullah and Abdul Baha is universally felt and their writings are being studied and translated into

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Living Pictures. In the Great Drama of the 19th Century by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Julie Chanler

LIVING PICTURES

In the Great Drama of the 19th Century

By

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

and

JULIE CHANLER

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Books by Ruth White

Correspondence between the High Commissioner of Palestine and Ruth White, regarding the alleged Will of Abdu'l Baha

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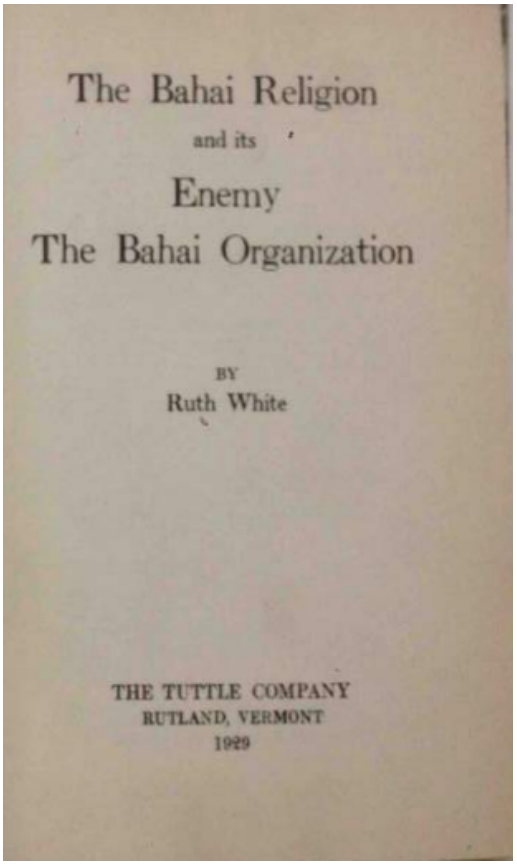
The Bahai Religion and its enemy the Baha'i Organization by Ruth White



The Bahai Religion
and its
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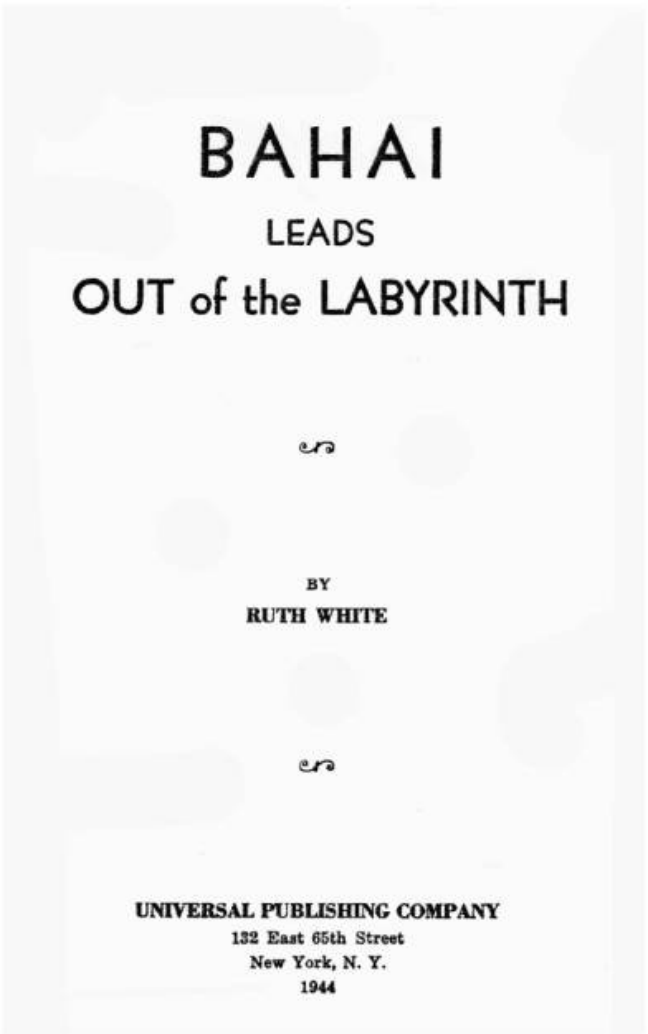
The Bahai Organization

BY
Ruth White

THE TUTTLE COMPANY
RUTLAND, VERMONT
1929

Bahai Leads Out of the Labyrinth by Ruth White

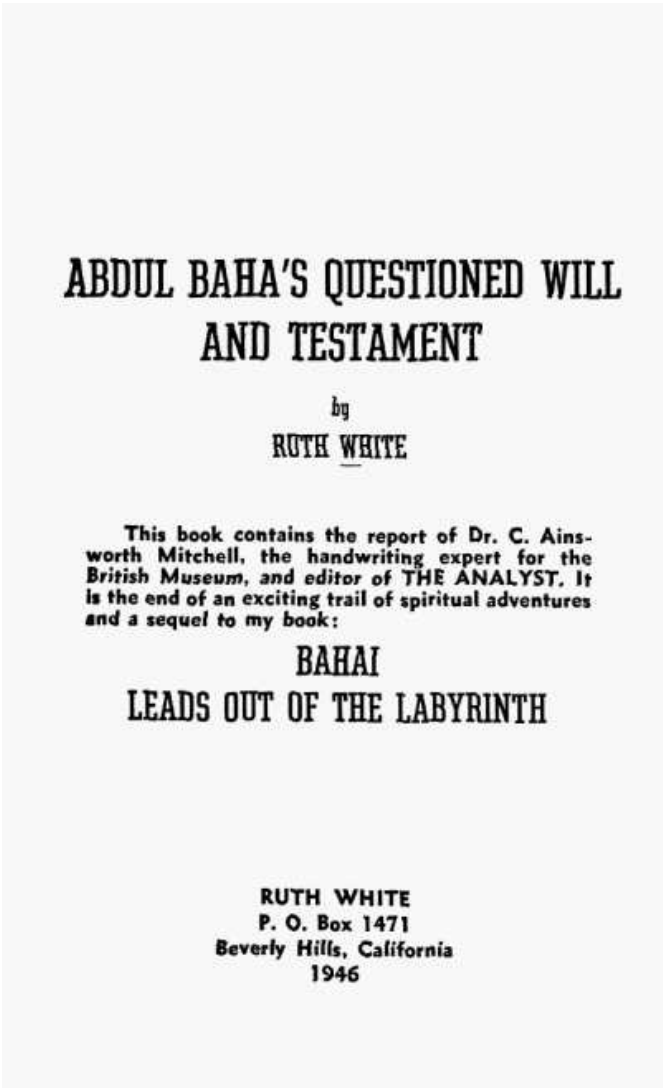


BAHAI
LEADS
OUT of the LABYRINTH

BY
RUTH WHITE

UNIVERSAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
132 East 65th Street
New York, N. Y.
1944

Abdul Baha's Questioned Will and Testament by Ruth White



ABDUL BAHA'S QUESTIONED WILL AND TESTAMENT

by

RUTH WHITE

This book contains the report of Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, the handwriting expert for the British Museum, and editor of THE ANALYST. It is the end of an exciting trail of spiritual adventures and a sequel to my book:

BAHAI LEADS OUT OF THE LABYRINTH

RUTH WHITE
P. O. Box 1471
Beverly Hills, California
1946

Is the Bahai Organization the Enemy of the Bahai Religion by Ruth White

IS THE BAHAI ORGANIZATION THE ENEMY OF THE BAHAI RELIGION?

AN APPENDIX TO ABDUL BAHA AND THE PROMISED AGE

RUTH WHITE

Breaking Away: My Journey from Mainstream to Free Baha’i Faith

My name is John and I am currently 47 years old. I was raised in the United States as a Baha’i and accepted the Baha’i faith when I was only 23, through a close friend of mine whose entire family was actively involved in the community. My friend and her family taught me the importance of Baha’i teachings while I was young, and I grew up with a strong connection to my faith. However, as I got older, I became more curious about the different sects within the Baha’i faith and started to do my own research.

At first, I was drawn to the Free Baha’i sect. I found their beliefs and practices to be more in line with my own personal values, and I appreciated the emphasis they placed on social justice and community involvement. However, I was hesitant to fully embrace the Free Baha’i faith, as I knew it would be a major departure from the mainstream institution in which I was raised.

s

Despite my reservations, I continued to learn more about the Free Baha’i teachings. I was struck by the depth and complexity of their beliefs and began to see how many of the things I had taken for granted in my upbringing were not necessarily universal to all Baha’is.

One day, after a particularly enlightening conversation with a friend from a Free Baha’i background, I made the decision to accept the Free Baha’i teachings. It was a difficult choice, as I knew it would mean breaking with many of my friends, but I felt it was the right thing to do. Sadly, many of my close friends turned away from me and declared me a covenant breaker after I informed them about my conversion.

Over time, I became more and more involved in the Free Baha’i teachings. I started holding meetings at my house and worked towards taking care of the less privileged and the needy. I was inspired by the concept of working for humanity and worked hard to help those in need in my locality and nearby places.

Despite the challenges I faced in the face of social boycott from my friends, I never regretted my decision to accept the core teachings of the Cause. I felt that it had given me a deeper understanding of my faith and a stronger connection to Baha’u’llah.

However, as I became more involved in the teachings, I began to encounter some eye-opening facts about the history of the Baha’i faith and the differences between Haifans and Free Baha’i beliefs. I learned about the early conflicts between the two sects and how those conflicts had shaped the Baha’i faith today.

I was also shocked to discover some of the prejudices and misconceptions that existed within the Haifan community about the Free Baha’is. I realized that many Haifans had a distorted view of Free Baha’i beliefs and practices.

Eventually, I came to the difficult decision to leave the mainstream Baha’i faith altogether. It was not a decision I made lightly, as I had many friends within the Haifan community. But I felt that I could no longer ignore the differences between the Haifan and Free Baha’i beliefs and that I needed to be true to my own convictions.

Leaving the Haifans was a difficult process for me, but I felt a sense of liberation as well. I was now free to fully embrace the Baha’i teachings and read and implement the core teachings of Baha’u’llah and the Master and to work towards building a more inclusive and unified world. I was free to question anything and everything wrong in the faith and at the same time not get excommunicated by anyone. I know that my

journey is far from over, but I am excited to see where it will take me next.

Source: The Caravan Magazine, Vol. 7, Edition 2

Want to be a contributor for The Caravan? Interested in contributing to the Caravan Magazine by writing a guest article? Kindly send us your article at thecaravan@freebahais.org and if we find your article unique, knowledgeable, and interesting enough for our readers, we will surely publish it in our upcoming issue. If you have any other queries, you can write to us at info@freebahais.org Thank you!

Can UHJ be considered infallible without a Guardian?

When Shoghi Effendi died, the so-called subordinate spiritual leaders he had appointed, termed “Hands of the Cause of God,” seized the affairs of the Baha’i Faith. Initially, they claimed for themselves all the powers of the Guardianship. Later, they claimed the authority to form a Universal House of Justice without any Guardian, altering the requirements for the Divine Administrative Order set down by Abd’ul-Baha in his holy writings and interpretations.

- “The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the divine fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words. This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the Guardian of the Cause of God. He must continually urge them to strive and endeavour to the utmost of their ability to diffuse the sweet savers of God, and to guide all the peoples of the world, for it is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined. To disregard, though it be for a moment, this absolute command which is binding upon everyone, is in no wise permitted.” (Abd’ul-Baha. Will and Testament, p. 13.)

- “The Hands (pillars) of the Cause and the beloved of the Lord must obey him and turn unto him [the Guardian]. He that obeyeth him not, hath not obeyed God; he that turneth away from him, hath turned away from God; and he that denieth him, hath denied the True One.” (Abd’ul-Baha. Will and Testament, p. 25.)

- “Beware lest anyone falsely interpret these words, and like unto them that have broken the

> Covenant after the Day of Ascension (of Baha'ullah) advance a pretext, raise the standard of revolt, wax stubborn and open wide the door of false interpretation. To none is given the right to put forth his own opinion or express his particular conviction." (Abd'ul-Baha. Will and Testament, pp. 25-26.)

Did the Hands of Cause really hold such comprehensive authority? Are they infallible? Do the Baha'is have to accept what they did as automatically correct, even if it conflicts with and banishes previous teachings of the faith?

Canvassing at the NSA Election In 1968, As a Result of Which the UHJ Dissolved the NSA And Requested a New Election – Guest Article

The process of Baha'i elections, as we all know, is completely different from the methodology and practices of elections in other political systems. At least, it is what the Baha'i authorities usually explain. The Baha'i Guardian has stated that if politicians' election methods are followed, misunderstandings and divisions would occur, turmoil and confusion will result, mischief will prevail, and God's confirmations will be shut off from that Baha'i community. Given these dire warnings, wouldn't a devout Baha'i go to great lengths to ensure that the purity and spiritual integrity of Baha'i elections be preserved? But, regrettably, we view things differently. Although we see these things occurring in the Baha'i community with every year with every other election, the only difference is that measures are done just once in a while.

A former counselor explained that somewhere in the early 70s, there was a huge canvassing in the NSA election. UHJ wrote to counsellors that they should decide on the problem right away. Because of the gravity of the situation, it was decided that all of the Counselors should travel to India. The five Counselors met with India's National Spiritual Assembly to assess the tragedy's impact and organize the next Convention's convocation.

The news was then relayed to the public, culminating in the announcement of the Supreme Body's penalty against Dr. Bhargava, Mr. Vadji, Mr. Lad, and Mr. Tripathy. It was the clear instruction from the Supreme Body that the reasons for the reconvocation of the National Convention and the re-election of the NSA should be defined, and the delegates to the Convention should be told of the sanctions imposed on them. Mr. Rahmani and Dr. Salmanpour also joined the meeting, and the matter was fully explained after the inspection was done. It was written to the Supreme Body that indeed there was 'corruption' and 'collision' of monetary machinations in India, with a direct link to Mr. Vadji and his utter humiliation.

The absent delegates' ballots were one of the major elements publicly recognized by NSA members. The center of canvassing is the area where the majority of delegates are illiterate, either completely or partially. Traveling instructors are frequently hired to accept ballots, and it is here that electioneering, canvassing, and other nefarious activities take place. If a lot of delegates from the south of India want to attend the Convention, they will have to travel three days by train to New Delhi, necessitating at least a week to travel and remain in Delhi. For laborers, growers, and low-wage staff, this is exorbitant. Despite the fact that the NSA covers all expenses and lodging, the delegates from the South will have a difficult time attending the Convention. Bhopal and Gwalior are home to the majority of the delegates. They are greeted by visiting teachers. Unfortunately, there are a few illiterates within this group. Electioneering's multifaceted ramifications may clearly be sensed in various areas. It was also thought that Mr. Lad would initiate entangling activities and contemplate to gain an accomplice in his venture. And Dr. Bhargava would recede presently, but finally, he would join Mr. Lad and create trouble, particularly in regions such as Bihar and Gwalior. It was also said that looking at the potential of these two members, there should be consideration and tact so that these members do not react. So, where was the spirit of Bahai Election, it shows "Mighty wins the Race."

The same practices are still rampant but with the knowledge of the Supreme Body who sees that if the desired members are elected on the NSA, they overlook it. But if undesired elements are elected, then they ask for their resignation citing malpractices.

Mr. Oliya was being elected on the NSA for many years with all the above-mentioned malpractices, but he was still allowed to continue. However, Dr. Ahmed Ansari was an undesired member, so he was asked to quit.

Mrs. Farideh Vahidi and Dr. Moghbelpour were also considered undesired members and were asked to quit.

It should be mentioned that the preceding occurrence occurred about 50 years ago, and no such action has been taken since then. If you ask any Baha'i, they will tell you that similar things are still happening around them throughout the election season, but no one is doing anything about it. When you observe certain inexperienced or immature Baha'is participate in electioneering, whether publicly or surreptitiously, it is the job of the Counsellor present to stand up and aid in the eradication of such inclinations and the purification of the Baha'i community from such bad influences. Rather than being drawn to mimic them, you should resolve to help in the eradication of such inclinations and the purifying of the Baha'i community from such bad influences by right administrative means. Only then will we be able to cleanse our system of such atrocities as Baha'is.

-Former Member of NSA OF INDIA

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 6, Edition 1

Dead Addresses Align Baha'i Demographics with the US Population!?

"The words of the House of Justice are boring and no one should care for it" "Spirituality and dedication to the faith has no bearing on one's faith and loyalty to the covenant"

Those were the paraphrased words of the administration representative who "graced" our local feast this month. As it happened, this event also served as the venue for electing national delegates. As expected from the local assembly, it featured a red-carpet reception with the typical flattery one anticipates when an administration representative visits.

However, this administration representative revealed the core of their stance when she proudly declared that the faithful no longer care about what the UHJ has to say. Mimicking boredom and acknowledging the dull response to the UHJ's words, she confidently stated that the faithful no longer care for messages from the House and avoid discussing them because they find them boring. How nice!

The members of the administration are now openly acknowledging what the faithful have known for a long time. The words of the UHJ are plain and simply irrelevant, constituting a collection of high-sounding yet meaningless words.

Next came the bigger revelation. She declared, referring to the March 2007 message of the UHJ, that those who vote are considered faithful and loyal Baha'is. Think about it for a moment. Prayers? No. Fasting? No. Reading and deepening? No. Teaching? No. But what makes you a loyal and faithful Baha'i? Voting!

This was a blow to the generational Baha'is who have dedicated their lives and resources to the faith. Some of us devoted our entire lives to the cause, and others contributed their resources. But no! According to the administration, you are considered faithful if you participate in their electoral charade. Additionally, this administration representative urged all Baha'is to reconsider their choices if they have already voted for someone loyal to the administration.

At this point, I as a Free Baha'i would add my thought – Abdu'l Baha, a central figure in the faith, never participated in voting. Should we then question his loyalty and faithfulness?

Finally, it wouldn't surprise me if the die-hard Haifan Baha'is, those who've been fervently supporting the Administration, start questioning the Master or twist his words to match the stance of the UHJ or the Administration. It appears their aim is to sidestep independent truth-seeking, a fundamental aspect of Baha'i teachings. They rally behind the Administration, branding anyone who questions them as anti-faith or even a covenant breaker.

Thankfully, our allegiance remains unwaveringly aligned with the teachings of Baha'u'llah, and we won't back down no matter what. May Baha'u'llah bless us with the strength and courage to stay true to the path he has illuminated.

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 8, Edition 4

Declarations in the Free Baha’i Faith

We the Free Baha’is do not believe in declarations. We believe in spreading the true teachings of Baha’u’llah and don’t work for numbers. A Free Baha’i should purify himself from greed of attaining positions, and start working out of love for humanity and world peace.

Our Master has clearly stated,

“There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not appointed any one to perform any special services, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is purely a democracy, and not a theocracy.”

(Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

These man-made assemblies and authoritative positions have pushed the Baha’is to work out of greed of acquiring positions which lead to fake reports and false statistics. But, if a person frees himself from administration, he will fulfill his duties towards Baha’u’llah and not for NSA or UHJ. Thus, he will be rewarded by Baha’u’llah for his efforts. For this reason, Free Baha’is do not believe in Officers or Office Bearers and one must be the Guardian of his own faith and action.

So, anyone who would wish to work for the faith should follow the teachings of Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l Baha, serve the faith and promote world peace and harmony.

Why do you think the Baha’i Faith got split into various groups after the passing away of the Master? Don’t you think the rule of the so-called guardian Shoghi Effendi and his Administration has played a very crucial role in the division and disunity of the Baha’is?

Did Shoghi Effendi die a natural death or was he murdered?

Shoghi Effendi did not accept making any changes to the content of the 10-year plan, or to change the members of the International Baha'i Council, or to change its appointed Chairman (Mason Remey); and had referred in his tablet no. 101 to the statement of Abdu'l Baha, indicating, "To the people of righteous (i.e. the Baha'is)"

The continent of America is the center of the lights of spiritual insight and the country of the appearance of the secrets, the source of the virtuous people, and the place of gathering of the free people.
Therefore, John Ferraby, Hasan Afnan Balyuzi, and Ruhiyya Maxwell (who was suffering from the infertility complex, and at the same time was very angry with the appointment of Mason Remey, an old man as the president of the embryonic International Baha'i Council. Since Shoghi Effendi did not agree to take their pressure of changing the President, these people surreptitiously poisoned the him. On Sunday, Oct 27th of 1957, the effects of the poison appeared, and the fingers of his joints started aching. Ruhiyya Khanum asked Shoghi if he was facing any other difficulty and pain, to which he replied, 'No! Just feel pain in my fingers that are contracted.' Then added, 'I am very tired; very tired!'

That night, Shoghi Effendi had fever. The next day his fever went up to 39C. While the members of the Britain NSA and other agencies of the UK, two Hands of the Cause, their ABMs, the prominent Physicians, high qualified hospitals, and enough money were available, Ruhiyya Khanum just contacted an unknown medicine doctor, who without visiting the patient wrote a prescription. The physician, in the evening, after his work at the hospital went to see Shoghi Effendi. After examination, he informed that both Shoghi Rabbani and Ruhiyya were suffering from the critical Asiatic flu. Nevertheless, they did not convene any medical council, nor acknowledged the Baha'i World Center. They also did not inform the NSA of UK, and did not ask any consultation from the Baha'i specialized physicians in London.

Came next Tuesday, when Ruhiyya Khanum became so well that the doctor let her go out for an important case (though the important case was never known!) Since after the flu, Shoghi was affected by pneumonia, the doctor, after visiting him, gave an explanatory report about his medical condition to Ruhiyya Khanum.

Shoghi Effendi, according to his initial program, was interested to leave London for Haifa, but the doctor

opposed him. Ruhiyya Khanum, who was the liaison officer between the Guardian and the Baha'i International Council, did not inform the Council about the situation and the changes. Again, John Ferraby, who was both, a Hand of the Cause and the Secretary of the NSA of the UK, and Hasan Balyuzi (Afnan) who was a Hand and a member of the NSA, did not inform the National Baha'i Organization, the Baha'i medical committee, and the Baha'i physicians from the case; and refused to acknowledge the sickness of the Guardian and thus prevented the formation of the Medical Consultation Council.

On Saturday morning, the 2nd of November, as Shoghi Effendi found himself in a constrained situation, hopelessly requested Ruhiyya Khanum to give him the 10-year Plan, so that he may complete it before his death!
Ruhiyya Khanum decided to prevent him, but he said, 'No, I should complete it! Because it has occupied my thoughts, and I should finish it. Today, I received 1-2 more names by post, that should be added to the program, and finalise it!' During the completion of the program he said, 'It seems that this case is killing me. How can I complete it?'

On that day, after finishing his work, the beloved Guardian looked very tired. For lunch, he could just eat one spoon food; and he couldn't eat anything for dinner. The manner of his talking on that evening indicated his severe depression. He was very sad and depressed. His talking was so emotional that even those who participated is those wicked deeds, became anxious and heartbroken! In the evening, the doctor came and visited Shoghi Effendi. He informed that Shoghi would be able to leave for Haifa on Tuesday. The next day was a Sunday, being an off for the doctor, he said that it will be unnecessary to come and visit Shoghi. By hearing that Ruhiyya Khanum became upset and shameful, because of her cooperation in those sinful deeds.

In the morning of the Sunday, November 3, she knocked at the door of Shoghi Effendi and as she heard no answer, she went in. She saw him asleep on his left side, while his eyes were open, as if he was looking at the entering people. His left hand was on his right shoulder, while his right hand was on his left hand. His eyes were open, and his stomach and intestine were blown up. Ruhiyya Khanum contacted the doctor, and after getting assurance that Shoghi has passed away, she telephoned the Hands of the Cause, Hasan Balyuzi, and John Ferraby (who were her cooperators) and informed about Shoghi's ascension. John Ferraby asked her to be calm and patient until his coming! After their arrival, they released the doctor they first consulted. Then, they sutured the intestine of Shoghi Effendi and then closed the door of his room. A telegram was prepared, with the signature of Ruhiyya Khanum, and sent to Haifa on Monday:
"The Guardian of the Cause is seriously affected by the Asian flu. Tell Leroy (Ioas) to inform all the national assemblies, and the Friends to pray and request for the protection of the Cause. Ruhiyya." Then, the Hand of the Cause, Ugo Giachery, was contacted by telephone, in Rome. He entered London at 20:00 the same day. They decided to declare the death of Shoghi Effendi via Radio. Ruhiyya Khanum was asked to neglect her previous telegram, and by sending a new telegram, acknowledges the ascension as below:
"Shoghi Effendi, the beloved of the hearts of the Baha'is, and the sacred deposit of Abdul-Baha, was ascended as a result of his affection to the Asian flu, and heart attack while fallen asleep. Repeat to the Friends to be firm and patient, and follow the institution of the Hands of the Cause, which was developed under his auspices, and has recently been consolidated by him. Only the unity of the hearts and the unity of the aim may witness the steadfastness of all the Bahai National Assemblies and the Friends towards the Guardian, who sacrificed his all life for the service of the Cause of God. Ruhiyya."

(to be continued...)

Authored by, Major Yadullah Thabit Rasekh

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DID YOU KNOW? When the Bab was martyred and killed, he was only 30 years old.

When the Bab was martyred and killed, he was only 30 years old. He was charged with apostasy and shot by order of the Prime Minister of the Persian Empire. Apostasy is the abandonment or rejection of a religious belief. It should be noted that Prophets often have short lifespans. Christ died on the cross at 33, after teaching his new Faith for only three years. For some reason, the leaders of humanity often react badly to the founders of the world's great Faiths and persecute them terribly. Abraham and Moses faced prison, exile, ridicule, and persecution. Krishna and Buddha suffered derision and official censure. Society's leaders crucified Christ; made war on Muhammad; tortured, exiled, and imprisoned Baha'u'llah; and executed The Bab.

Initially, only a few people learned about the Bab and his teachings, but then thousands and tens of thousands began to become Babis, breaking away from their society's traditions and challenging the authority of its leaders. The rapid growth of the Babi Faith challenged the underpinnings of Persian society. Persia's clerics and rulers did not react kindly to this new religious development, to say the least.

Just six years after the Bab's announcement of his new Faith in 1844, the Qajar government ordered the execution of this young, intensely charismatic messenger—who was only thirty years old at the time. The government and the Islamic clerics had already gruesomely tortured and killed more than 20,000 of the Bab's ardent followers during the short, intense six-year duration of the Babi movement. Because the Bab called for revolutionary changes to the prevailing system of religious belief and governance, and because he taught the unity of all religions, the authorities feared that this dynamic new challenge and its growing support would soon sweep them from power.

Despite wholesale genocide against its followers, more and more people continued to become Babis. In 1850, frightened of its growing influence and desperate to crush the Babi movement, the authorities decided to execute The Bab. When they charged him with apostasy—the same exact charge the Pharisees levelled against Jesus—the Bab refused to repent or refute his teachings, calmly accepting the consequences.

Some accounts state that the Bab and one of his companions were suspended on a wall where they were shot by a large firing squad. But, when the smoke cleared after the first firing of bullets, the Bab was missing. It is said that he was found back in his prison room finishing dictation to his secretary. There are several other interpretations of this miracle story. Even so, they all agree that the Bab survived the first firing squad and was killed by the second.

For many years after the Bab's death, his followers secretly transported his body from place to place to avoid the desecration of his remains. The Bab was finally laid to rest at the Shrine of the Bab in Haifa on the middle terrace of the Baha'i Gardens.

Baha'is commemorate the Martyrdom of the Bab with prayers and scripture. Specifically, the Baha'i scripture called Tablets of Visitation. This scripture signifies the passing of an important figure.

Does the UHJ Only Like Building Grand Houses of Worship? – Guest Article

Modern Baha'is understand the building of the House of Worship to be the duty of the Baha'i administration. But a little-known fact is that Baha'u'llah actually gives this duty to the people, not the institutions:

"O people of the world! Build houses of worship throughout the lands in the name of Him Who is the Lord of all religions. Make them as perfect as is possible in the world of being, and adorn them with that which befitteth them, not with images and effigies. Then, with radiance and joy, celebrate therein the praise of your Lord, the Most Compassionate. Verily, by His remembrance, the eye is cheered and the heart is filled with light."

–Baha'u'llah, Kitab i Aqdas

Indeed, the first House of Worship in Ishqabad was built by the people. Haji Mirza Muhammad Taqi Afnan, Vakilu'd-Dawlih, maternal cousin of the Bab, took the individual initiative to build the temple. He largely paid for and supervised the building of the House of Worship, spending nearly all of his personal fortune.

Why do we not see such examples of individual initiative in the Baha'i community today? This excerpt from former Baha'i Juan Cole's 'Reply to Peter Khan Talk in New Zealand' may shed some light on that:
'The national budget of the US community in the 1990s was only about $20 million a year on average. The Universal House of Justice took an average of $6 million a year from that. It impoverished the US community. It funneled enormous amounts of money to these projects. Local communities were left strapped. And when one local community expressed its aspiration to build a local Mashriqu'l-Adhkar (house of worship), the UHJ sent agents out to bully these devoted Baha'is and make it clear to them that such a step (which would, after all, interfere with building terraces in Haifa) was out of the question, and they should shut up and sit down, Or Else. Yet `Abdu'l-Baha commanded the building of local houses of worship, which he said was an urgent goal... In the meantime, local communities have to sit on the floor of someone's apartment during Feast...'"

I haven't seen a source for Cole's claim that the UHJ sent agents to antagonize the local community's initiative to build a house of worship, but as a Baha'i whose own initiatives have been pushed back against by Baha'i administration, I fully believe it.

The Baha'i administration is hostile to individual initiative. It is common to hear stories of the Baha'i administration pressuring local assemblies to sell or cease leasing buildings. Why? A quick look at the annual budget of the local assembly will make the reason clear.

Baha'is tend to be both wealthy and generous, so local Baha'i communities receive lots of money in donations. But even though these donations are made specifically to local assemblies, the local assembly spends a very small fraction of what it receives. The rest gets "funneled up" to the National Spiritual Assembly and the U H J, resulting in these institutions collecting enormous amounts of wealth.

But if Baha'i communities were to build temples and Baha'i centers, they would have significantly less money left over to get "funneled up" to the higher levels of the Baha'i administration. This is one of the major reasons why the Baha'i administration hates seeing local Baha'i communities building their own Baha'i centers, or God forbid, Houses of Worship.

Now that we have made the problem clear, let's talk about the solution. First, we should make clear that the Baha'i administration's oppression of individual initiative has no political solution. We cannot convince the Baha'i administration to change its ways. For 20 years people have protested, but it is hopeless because the Baha'i administration is an administration of idolaters who worship their own plans. They will never admit they are wrong, despite the fact that Baha'u'llah never granted the UHJ or any other institution infallibility, and despite the fact that Baha'u'llah even explicitly said that he has no partner in the most great infallibility. Since we cannot convince the Baha'i administration to solve the problem for us, we must solve the problem on our own.

Baha'is need to gain the courage to take individual initiative to build Houses of Worship in defiance of the UHJ. They should not fear punitive action from the UHJ, instead putting their faith in God and Baha'u'llah, gaining strength from knowing that they are on their side. Baha'u'llah says:

"Blessed is the strong one who shatters the idols of delusions in the name of his Lord, the owner of the worlds" –Baha'u'llah

Be a Strong One, who fears only God, and not delusions such as UHJ's supposed infallibility.

"He Who is the Dawning-place of God's Cause hath no partner in the Most Great Infallibility." –Baha'u'llah

Have faith in Baha'u'llah and never allow yourself to be convinced of dogmas invented by others. Anything not made explicit by Baha'u'llah can be questioned. And you can be certain that any attempts to override what Baha'u'llah explicitly said are false teachings. Baha'is must wholeheartedly reject the notion that the Baha'i administration can abrogate Baha'u'llah's giving of the duty of the building of the Houses of Worship to the people. Baha'is must defy the Baha'i administration out of respect for Baha'u'llah's word and do what Baha'u'llah tells them to do, and not what the UHJ tells them to do. Baha'is loyal to Baha'u'llah must band together and build Houses of Worship on their own, without fearing what the Baha'i administration would think.

What about resources? Isn't it costly to build a House of Worship? It's true that it is costly to build a grand House of Worship like the one in Wilmette or New Delhi, but according to Abdul Baha, it is of secondary importance for the House of Worship to be grand. Abdul Baha says:

"God willing, in all the states of America in the future there will be erected Temples with infinite architectural beauty, art, with pleasing proportion and handsome and attractive appearances; especially in New York. But for the present, be ye satisfied with a rented place."
(Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, p. 437)

"…an edifice or temple is to be built in order that humanity might find a place of meeting, and this is to be conducive to unity and fellowship among them." ('Abdu'l-Bahá, Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 65)

As to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, it is of the utmost importance. The purpose is this: A spot should be designated, even if it is a small place beneath layers of earth and stone, and it should, out of prudence, be kept hidden and concealed lest it arouse the hostility of the mischief-makers. At least once a week, it should become the gathering place of the chosen friends who have discovered the secrets and become the intimates of divine mysteries. It may assume any form, for even if it be an underground pit, that pit shall become a sheltering paradise, an exalted bower, and a garden of delight. It shall become a centre wherein the spirits are gladdened and the hearts attracted to the Abhá Kingdom. (From a Tablet—translated from the Persian)

"Gracious God! The edifice of the House of Worship hath a powerful influence on every phase of life. Experience hath, in the east, clearly shown this to be a fact. Even if, in some small village, a house was designated as the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, it produced a marked effect; how much greater would be the impact of

one especially raised up." (Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, no. 60.1)

The last two quotes especially make it clear that a building does not have to be grand in order to be a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. So Baha'is have no excuse not to build Houses of Worship. Buy a small house, or rent one, designate it as a "House of Worship," and then as far as the Baha'i writings are concerned, this will be a legitimate Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

So please, obey Baha'u'llah and build the Houses of Worship. Even a small Baha'i community typically has more than enough resources to do this. The only reason why they would not is because they lack courage, initiative, or because their faith in the UHJ is greater than their faith in Baha'u'llah.

-Trident

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 6, Edition 2

Hermann Zimmer

Mr. Hermann Zimmer was one of the pioneers of the Baha'i Faith in Germany. He proved his devotion to the faith by going at his own expense, and at the risk of his life, to Berlin during World War II, in an attempt to have the ban on the Baha'is removed, but unfortunately he did not succeed. He has stated that his friend Mr. Wilhelm Herrigel, also one of the Baha'i pioneers in Germany, was not "misled" by Mrs. White, as Shoghi Effendi stated, but came to the same conclusion by independent study of the evidence, and as a result, formed the "Free Baha'is" with a number of members who rebelled against the Guardian and the Baha'i Organization. Mr. Zimmer also is opposed to what he calls "Baha'i totalitarianism," and has written extensively against it.

Mr. Zimmer Hermann claimed that the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha is a fraudulent document. Shoghi Effendi changed it for his own personal gain to claim for Guardianship. Shoghi Effendi changed the most unpolitical religion in the world to a political religion, ignoring the sayings of Abdu'l Baha that "This religion could not be compressed into an organization. Shoghi built up an administration where the spirit of the Religion of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha was completely missing. He became for himself a world dictator a power hungry person who excommunicated all the members of the Abdu'l Baha's family, including his own parents. He abrogated the most important principle of the Baha'i Faith "Independent investigation of the Truth" and called the followers of the Baha'i Faith as "Harmful Elements", as "Enemies" or "Crazy".

The Baha'i Religion is altered to function as 'Shoghism"

What today is presented as the Baha'i religion is, in truth, "Shoghism" – Shoghism, the alleged Baha'i religion, as practiced today – Censorship, prohibition of political activity and excommunication are not milestones for a new world order.

To conclude:

"The alleged Will of Abdu'l Baha was not written throughout by the same person."

"No part of the alleged Will has the characteristics of the writing of Abdu'l Baha, as shown in the authenticated specimens."

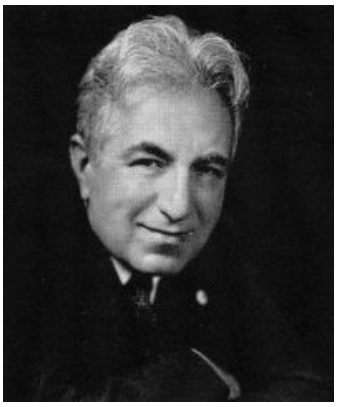
HIS WRITINGS:

A fraudulent testament devalues the Baha'i religion into political Shoghism

English by Jeannine Blackwell

Revised by Karen Gasser M.A. and Gordon Campbell M.A.

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab



A BRIEF BIO:

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab was born in the year 1894 (as mentioned in My Baha'i Pilgrimage, page 21), to a family who was already a Baha'i, or had recently embraced the Baha'i faith. Sohrab was born near Esphahan, the village of Isfahan Province, Persia (now Iran). Sohrab's father Abdu'l-Baghi was the descendent of Prophet Muhammad. Abdu'l-Baghi was a farmer "possessed of broad lands" and also chief dyer of the town. Both sides of Sohrab's family, his mother and his father, claimed descent from the Imam Husayn, grandson of Prophet Muhammad. His mother died when Sohrab was a few months old, while she herself was still a teenager, and he was taken to live with his maternal grandmother in Isfahan. (Source: My Baha'i Pilgrimage, page 25)

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab hailed from Isfahan, Iran. He immigrated to Acre at the age of 12. After a short stay there he was sent by Sir Abbas Effendi to Port Said, in Egypt, where he worked as a salesman in Sir Abbas Effendi's son-in-law Mirza Ahmad Yazdi's store. After several years he proceeded to the United States, and acted as an interpreter to Sir Abbas Effendi's Baha'i proselytiser Mirza Add-al-Fadl of Gulpaygan. When Sir Abbas Effendi visited the United States in 1912, Mirza Sohrab became part of his entourage, and returned with him to Palestine. During World War I He was Sir Abbas Effendi's Persian scribe and translator. When the war was over, Sir Abbas Effendi sent him back to the United States as a bearer of the "Divine Plan" drafted by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, 1947.

HIS SERVICE TO THE BAHA'I FAITH:

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In his publications, the word Mirza which means Mr. is invariably prefixed to his name Ahmad Sohrab. According to him, he was "a descendent of the Prophet Muhammad". Mirza Sohrab enjoyed the full confidence of Sir Abbas Effendi, with whom, he had been intimately associated as his Persian scribe and translator. He was also very well acquainted the members of Sir Abbas Effendi's family, including Shoghi Effendi, with whom he was on the best terms. Like other partisans, under pains and penalties of expulsion from the faith, to communicate and associate with the members of Baha's family excommunicated by Sir Abbas Effendi for their alleged deviation from him as the centre of the covenant, a title to which Sir Abbas

Effendi took a fancy, with which he labelled himself, and which, on the strength of the Baha's own revelation (Materials for the Study of Babi Religion by Prof. Browne P. 111), was exclusive to the god, alone, Baha who himself before the creation of the heaven and the earths that man should worship none save god alone."

HIS POINT OF DIFFERENCE WITH SHOGHI EFFENDI:

He met Lewis Chanler and his wife during his visit to New York for business purpose. They both felt the need to teach the original teachings of Abdu'l Baha and Baha'u'llah openly and in an accessible manner. Been a translator and secretary to Abdul Baha, he has quotes from Abdul baha and Baha'u'llah emphasizing to make his teachings universal and not to restrict them to any particular faith or give an organizational form to his teachings. They started lectures on this and named their organization as New History Society. They also sent letter to Shoghi Effendi regarding this activity seeking his acknowledgment, blessings and support. Shoghi appreciated their effort but also gently warned them of forming new groups in Baha'i faith. The LSA and NSA of USA and Canada wanted to keep close watch on their activity and try to restrict their mode of teaching as per Baha'i administration. Mirza Ahmad opposed this idea of restricted preaching. Horace Holley, one of the chief Baha'i administrator of USA was the main to confront Mirza Ahmad. He believed Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian but had a question regarding his authority over people of faith. Despite repeated warnings and messages from LSA and NSA they continued. Finally they were excommunicated by Shoghi Effendi in 1939.

In 1941, Allen McDaniel and others, as members of the National Spiritual Assembly, filed suit against Sohrab to try to stop him from using the name Baha'i. This suit was filed in the Supreme Court of New York County. The judge granted a motion to dismiss, stating that "the plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion..." The judge mentioned that the complaint could be further amended and the NSA appealed but the Appellate Court affirmed the decision of the lower court. After his excommunication, Sohrab joined forces with other people who opposed Shoghi Effendi. Part of this combination was a court case raised by Qamar Baha'i, Jalal the grandson of Mirza Músa and others in about 1950-1, challenging Shoghi Effendi's right to carry out major construction work around the Shrine of Baha'u'llah. One of their key witnesses, Nayyir Afnan, died shortly before the case was due to open, and it all came to nothing.

HIS VIEWS REGARDING THE FAITH:

An organized religion is hard, dour, rigid, iron-handed and iron hearted; it is stern, arrogant, coercive and merciless. An administered religion has been, is and ever shall remain an arrested religion; for the premise that a few individuals or a network of individuals are able to organize or administer the spiritual realities of God, is an assumption as false as it is impertinent, and as outlandish as it is sacrilegious. Here is the test of the true religion: Does it unite the minds and hearts of the people in the task of developing a stable society and a humane civilization? Does it make us more tolerant, more sympathetic, more compassionate, more joyous, more sincere, and more loving? If it accomplishes these things, then it is religion, indeed, and it comes straight from the Creator of the Universe"

HIS WRITINGS:

1. Heart Phantasies, (sometime before 1929), date uncertain.

2. The New Humanity, appeared daily for some time in a Santiago newspaper, (sometime before 1929), date uncertain.

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4. `Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt on Baha'i Library

5. Living Pictures. In the Great Drama of the 19th Century. (with Julie Chanler) New York: The New History Foundation, 132 E 65th St, New York, 1933. Reprinted. H-Baha'i: Lansing, Michigan, 2004.

6. I Heard Him Say. Words of `Abdu'l-Bahá as Recorded by his Secretary. New York: The New History Foundation, 1937. Digitally republished, East Lansing, Mi.: H-Baha'i, 2004.

7. The Bible of Mankind, (ed.) 743 pp., Universal Publishing Co., 132 E 65th St, N.Y., 1939.

8. A Persian Rosary of Nineteen Pearls. 2nd. ed. New York, Caravan of East & West, n.d. [194-?] 3rd. ed. New York, Caravan of East & West, n.d. [195-?] ed., [4]. New York: New History Society, n.d. [1939].

9. `Abdu'l-Bahá's Grandson: Story of a Twentieth Century Excommunication. New York: Universal Publishing Co for The New History Foundation, 1943. Reprinted. H-Baha'i: Lansing, Michigan, 2004.

10. Brand, Max and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab [libretto Max Brand, and Julie Chanler; Music Max Brand]. The Gate: Scenic Oratorio for Soli, Chorus, and Orchestra in Two Parts (19 Scenes). 61. New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1944.

11. The Story of the Divine Plan. Taking Place during, and immediately following World War I. New York: The New History Foundation, 1947. Digitally republished, East Lansing, Mi.: H-Baha'i, 2004.

12. Ioas, Leroy, Mrs Lewis Stuyvesant [Julie Chanler] Chanler, and Ahmad Sohrab. Three Letters. [11] leaves. New York: Caravan of East and West, 1954.

13. Living Schools of Religion. Vergilius Form, ed. Ames, Iowa: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1956. Chapter 19, "The Bahá'í Cause," by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab (pages 309-14)

14. My Bahá'í Pilgrimage. Autobiography from Childhood to Middle Age. New York: New History Foundation, 1959. Reprinted. H-Baha'i: Lansing, Michigan, 2004.

15. The Song of the Caravan. Another ed. also 1930, New York, The Grayzel Press ed., xii, 410. New York: George Dobsevage for the New History Foundation, 1930.

16. Broken Silence. The Story of Today's Struggle for Religious Freedom. Published by Universal Publishing Co. New York for The New History Foundation, 1942.

Lady Ruth White

Lady Ruth White is the most well-known Baha'i who is famous for challenging the authenticity of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha.

As an author she always used to correspond with the name Ruth White. Sometimes she used to write 'Mrs Lawrence White'. Her stage name was 'Ruth Berkeley'. Abdu'l Baha used to call her as 'Miss Ruth Berkeley', as mentioned in the book 'Baha'i Leads out of the Labyrinth'

She was born on 27th June in Brooklyn, New York. Her birth name was Emma Decker and her parents were Peter Decker and Anna Geiger.

Ruth White's Family Life

She was married twice during her life.

Her first husband was George Rowell. She had a daughter from this marriage.

Her second husband was Herbert Lawrence White. She met him at a Baha'i gathering in New York.

She was evidently yet living as late as 1962, in South Carolina, per the Pierre Pont genealogy.

Ruth White against Shoghi Effendi

Lady Ruth white turned against Shoghi Effendi due to his cruel acts. She has narrated the following incident:

"In the autumn of 1919, I sent to Abdu'l Baha [i.e. Sir Abbas Effendi] an American Express Company check of five hundred dollars and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing.

About four months after, we arrived in Haifa as the guests of Abdu'l Baha. On the day before departure I

asked Abdu'l Baha if he had received the check. Without a moment's hesitation and very emphatically he said that he had not received it. He repeated this a number of times, and seemed indignant that it had not been turned over to him. I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdu'l Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter.

He returned and said there were no record of the check. When I returned to America I asked the American Express Company to look up the receipt of the check I had sent through their office, and on the back of it was the signature of the person who had received the cash. This person was Shoghi Rabbani [i.e. Shoghi Effendi]."

Ruth White challenged the alleged Will of Abdu'l Baha

"If Abdu'l Baha had had any secret intention of appointing Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Baha'i Cause, it does not seem plausible that he would have excluded him from the entourage that accompanied him on his trip through Europe and America during 1912. Shoghi Effendi at that time was eighteen years of age and spoke and wrote English, Persian and Arabic; yet he was not included in this trip. Even after Abdu'l Baha returned to Palestine, instead of choosing Shoghi Effendi as his secretary, he chose Ahmad Sohrab, who had accompanied him to Europe and America, and who continued as his secretary for five succeeding years.

It is important for those who are interested in the Baha'i Religion to free them from the idea that the family of Abdu'l Baha is a "Holy Family." In fact his family, and "in-laws," with the exception of his wife and sister, were somewhat materialistic, and viewed the religion more or less as a little family affair with a strong bent toward organization. For years they have indoctrinated, more or less, the pilgrims who visited the home of Abdu'l Baha, me included, with this conception of religion. This partly nullified the great universal teachings. The result was that when Abdu'l Baha passed from this world in November, 1921. Some of his family, who had laid the ground-work for organization through these pilgrims while he was alive, hastened to establish it more firmly when he died. All this resulted in making the Baha'i Movement, under the dictatorship of Shoghi Effendi, an organization which for narrowness and bigotry has no parallel in history except in the dark ages."

Ruth White and the Free Baha'i faith

Abdu'l Baha has said, "There are no officers in faith. I do not and have not 'Appointed' anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a Theocracy."

Following the teachings of Abdu'l Baha, Lady Ruth White founded the Free Baha'i faith, an ideological group trying to disseminate the true faith of Baha'u'llah as against the Baha'i Administration and the UHJ.

Ruth White's Writings

Abdu'l Baha and the Promised Age, 1927, New York: J.J. Little and Ives Co., January 1929. (Copyright was renewed 2 Dec 1954 by Ruth White, see here) OCLC 3894952

Is the Baha'i Organization the Enemy of the Baha'i Religion? An appendix to Abdu'l Baha and the promised age. New York City 1929 OCLC 40732459

The Baha'i religion and its enemy, the Baha'i organization, 1930. Rutland, VT. The Tuttle Company OCLC 2815086

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Correspondence between the High Commissioner of Palestine and Ruth White, Concerning the Alleged Will and Testament of Sir Abdu'l Baha Abbas. 11. Los Angeles, Calif. : White, 1932. OCLC 23790959

Baha'í Leads out of the Labyrinth. New York: Universal Publishing Company, 132 E 65th Street, New York, 1944. Digitally republished, East Lansing, Mi.: H-Baha'i, 2004. OCLC 1527153

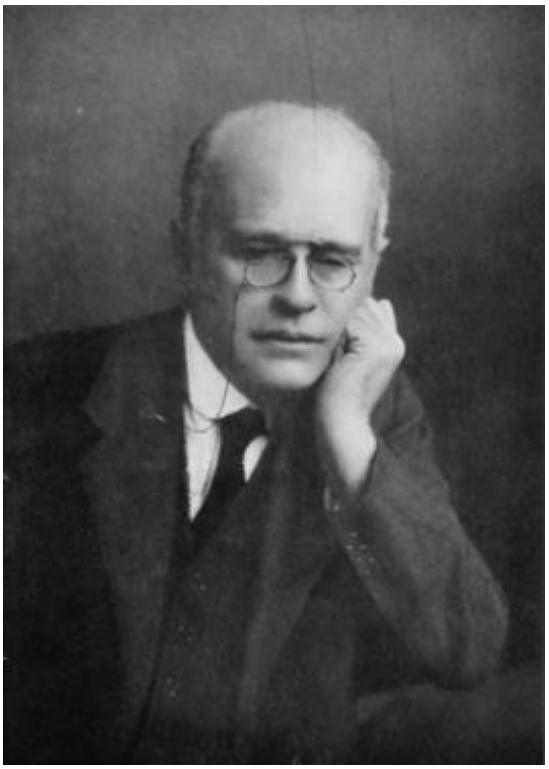
Abdu'l Baha's Questioned Will and Testament. Beverly Hills: Ruth White, 1946. Digitally republished, East Lansing, Mi.: H-Baha'i, 2004. OCLC 2488238

Handwriting Analysis of the Will of Abdu'l Baha by Dr. Mitchell

Click here to preview the **Hand Writing Analysis Report of the Alleged Will of Abdu'l Baha** by Dr. Mitchell

Who was Dr. Mitchell?

Charles Ainsworth Mitchell (20 November 1867 – 5 January 1948) was a British chemist and forensic scientist who made a special study of the microscopic and chemical study of handwriting. He was a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Chemistry and the Royal Society of Chemistry, and member of the Society of Public Analysts. He was editor of The Analyst for 25 years, president of the Medico-Legal Society (1935–1937), and vice president of the Society of Chemistry (1937–1940).



Dr. Charles Ainsworth Mitchell

Importance of Dr. Charles Ainsworth Mitchell to Baha'i Faith

The Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha is the "Centre of the Covenant" and fundamental part of the Baha'i faith. Ruth White was always aware of Shoghi's playboy and usurping nature (500-dollar incident). Ruth was very close to Abdu'l Baha but she never heard Him mention about Shoghi. Abdu'l Baha in his lifetime never declared him as His successor. Two years after Abdul Baha's death, the Will and Testament was released for public viewing which had Shoghi as successor.

Ruth White challenged the authenticity of the will and hired Charles Ainsworth Mitchell for analyzing the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha. White opposed parts of the will that suggested the establishment of a hierarchy in the Baha'i Faith. His report concluded in agreement with White, that the document was a

forgery. White placed Mitchell's signed report on the writing shown on the photographs of the document with the U.S. Library of Congress in 1930.

Career

Chemist

As a chemist and a scientist, Dr. Mitchell's work covered a wide range of topics. He became a fellow of the Royal Institute of Chemistry in 1897 and of the Royal Chemical Society in 1916. In 1907 he advocated using a pinhole camera to photograph the sun in an article in Knowledge and Scientific News, a method which he notes was known as early as 1615 but seemed to have been forgotten. In 1911, he advocated the switch from lead to copper pipes for drinking water. His reasoning was that copper would better be able to alert the drinker to an excess of poisonous sulphates in the water.In 1920 he became editor of The Analyst, a journal of the Royal Society of Chemistry, and under 25 years of his editorship the journal expanded in scope and increased in reputation.

Criminologist

In 1911, he was head of the inspection bureau of Scotland Yard.[9] He frequently served as an expert witness.
In 1915, he gave testimony about the invisible ink used in the case of German spy, Anton Kuepferle.
In 1925, he analyzed documents and seals of Mary, Queen of Scots and claimed to show that Mary was innocent of conspiracy to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I of England. He said that William Maitland, Mary's secretary, forged Mary's hand in the documents which led to Mary's execution. In 1929, he was an advocate of the use of fingerprints to determine identity, a method which he traced to Sir William Herschell in 1853, who saw the method used in to document an individuals identity in India, where he was a commissioner.He showed that monkeys may be identified by fingerprints and that the same could be done with the markings on a cow's nose.
He was hired by Ruth White to analyze the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha. White opposed parts of the Will that suggested the establishment of a hierarchy in the Bahá'í Faith. His report concluded in agreement with White, that the document was a forgery. White placed Mitchell's signed report on the writing shown on the photographs of the document with the U.S. Library of Congress in 1930

Some of the most famous works of Dr. Mitchell include:

1. Documents and their scientific examination : with especial reference to the chemistry involved in cases of suspected forgery, investigation of disputed documents, handwriting, etc.
by Mitchell, C. Ainsworth (Charles Ainsworth), 1867-1948
You can buy the book from Amazon *here!*

2. Inks: their composition and manufacture
by Mitchell, C. Ainsworth (Charles Ainsworth), 1867-1948; Hepworth, Thomas Cradock, d. 1905
You can buy the book from Amazon *here!*

3. Copying Ink Pencils and their Pigments in writing Analyst 1917

4. Graphites and other Pencil Pigments 1922

5. Pencil Markings in the Bodleian Library 1922

6. Differentiation of inks in writing Analyst 1908

7. Estimation of the age of ink in writing Analyst 1920

8. Inks and their Manufacture 2nd Edition London 1916

9. Cantor Lectures, “Inks,” Royal Society Arts 1922

Have the leaders of the Baha'i Faith overstepped the bounds of their authority?

After the death of the Shoghi Effendi, the Baha'i leaders A.K.A. Hands of the Cause decided that the authority designated for the Guardian in the Baha'i scriptures should be shifted to them, and eventually to the Universal House of Justice, which would exercise all the powers. They persuaded the vast majority of Baha'is to accept this as legitimate.

An alternative prospect would have been to declare that the powers of the Guardian had become void in the absence of the Guardianship.

At present, the UHJ of the Baha'i World Faith exercises various significant powers that were formerly supposed to be in the exclusive domain of the Guardian: interpretation of the scripture, collection and expenditure of Huquq'ullah, expulsion of people from the faith, declaring "Covenant-breakers," and impeachment of members of the Universal House of Justice.

There is no verse in the Baha'i holy writings suggesting that the Universal House of Justice can exercise those powers. In fact, some verses clearly designate the Guardianship as the only institution holding certain powers.

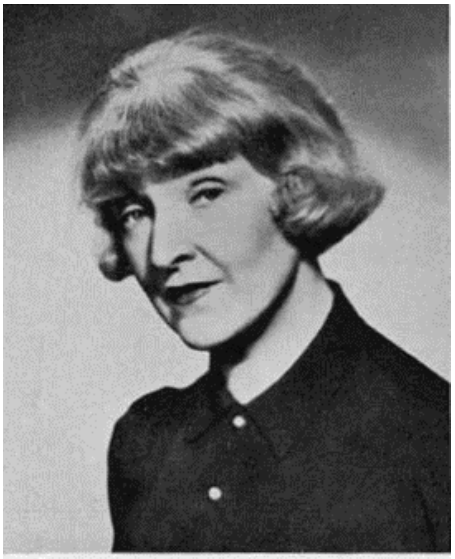
- "He [the Guardian] is the Interpreter of the Word of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendants." Abdu'l Baha (Will and Testament, p. 11.)
- "The Lord, as a sign of His infinite bounties, hath graciously favoured His servants by providing for a fixed money offering (Huquq), to be dutifully presented unto Him... It is to be offered through the Guardian of the Cause of God, that it may be expended for the diffusion of the fragrances of God and the exaltation of His Word, for benevolent pursuits and for the common weal." Abdu'l Baha (Will and Testament, p. 15.)
- "Should any of the members [of the Universal House of Justice] commit a sin, injurious to the common weal, the Guardian of the Cause of God hath at his own discretion the right to expel him, whereupon the people must elect another one in his stead." Abdu'l Baha (Will and Testament, p. 14.)

New History Society

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, a Persian-American author and a renowned Baha'i who served as a secretary and interpreter from 1912 to 1919 along with Lewis Chanler and his wife Julia formed the New History Society in 1929, in order to spread the teachings of the Baha'i faith. It was their independent effort to teach the principles of the Cause.

Mirza Ahmed used to take lectures in New York and many people used to attend it. Once at the end of a similar lecture demand came from a group of people who used to attend them regularly. These people wanted to be a part of the Cause and did not wish to be disbanded so Sohrab, Lewis and Julia all decided to form a little society.

Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler
as Lieutenant Governor of New York State



Julie Chanler

Initially, no name was decided for the group. Sohrab wanted to name it Soldiers of Light but no one liked this name and at the same time Julia suggested to call it the New History Society and Sohrab found it ideal and thus the said name got finalised.

Having settled with the name, the manuscript of The Ideals of the New History Society went to the printer. Mirza Ahmad ordered five hundred copies and it all exhausted in no time. It was a nice leaflet and the words of Abdu'l Baha which appeared on the front page read:

"The hosts of the Kingdom of Abhá are drawn and filed up in battle-array on the plain of the Supreme Apex and are expecting that a band of volunteers' step upon the field of action with the intention of service; so that they may assist that band and make it victorious and triumphant."

A large group assembled in the sitting room on the eve of April 5, 1929. Ahmad Sohrab spoke to the

followers of Christ and said that this day afforded such discipleship once again. After reading The Ideals of the New History Society, Ahmad Sohrab announced that those who wish to join the Society can sign their names in the book which is lay open between the lighted candles before the picture of Abdu'l Baha. The first person to go ahead and sign was Julia Chanler followed by Elsie, then Juliet Thompson, O. J. Hanko and others. Ahmad Sohrab's name was written at the last. A total of 28 people joined the Society that day. Everyone present did not join saying they need time to think.

Later, a lot of Baha'is became a part of the group and used to attend meetings. Advertisements went up in the newspapers, notices were sent to popular Baha'is and thus a huge crowd used to gather for the meet & greet programs at the centre. Both Julia and Lewis poured in their money freely, joyously. Lewis always opened the meeting and used to charm everyone with his presence. Other Baha'i used to read from the works of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. Baha'i books were sold at a table by the librarian of the Centre. The meetings held used to be lively and happening.

In January of 1930, Rabindranath Tagore from India addressed the New History Society in the ball room of the Ritz. The meeting was as usual opened by Lewis. It was a unique and memorable gathering of East and West, which was also reported by the New York Times the next day. Mr. Tagore appreciated the work of the New History Society with the following words while speaking to the audience –

"We are here tonight to offer our homage to Baha'u'llah, the last Prophet to come out of Asia. It makes me happy indeed to see that the New History Society is doing such splendid work for the propagation of the message of Baha'u'llah."

Within a week of Mr. Tagore's significant meeting, Albert Einstein addressed our group from the same platform. The New History Society was brought to the attention of the whole country.

Shortly after this, Professor John Dewey addressed the Society followed by Count Ilya Tolstoy, who gave a couple of lectures stretched over a few weeks. So, it went on and on with great speakers, great crowds, and the Society was on tip-toe all the time. Quite a few articles appeared in the newspapers.

Sohrab wanted to reach out to the young people and thus wrote a set of ideals which were printed in a leaflet which was read in a meeting of the younger group which was held on April 2nd, 1930. This leaflet also reached Wellington, New Zealand. Thus, the Caravan, as an international correspondence-club, started on its way via Wellington, New Zealand.

The meetings continued weekly, at which those who wished signed their names before the picture of Abdu'l Baha leading to an increase in the members of the New History Society. Later, some of the most esteemed Baha'is collaborated with the Society, Mr. and Mrs. Kinney, May Maxwell to name a few. With their experience and knowledge more study groups were formed. Thus, the activities of the New History Society became more popular and successful amongst the Baha'is.

Looking at the gaining popularity of the Society, affairs in the Baha'i world neared the boiling point. The National Assembly thus wanted to settle the matter once and for all. Ahmad Sohrab was instructed to appear before the Local Board. Ahmad refused to appear. He knew he would be forced to accept uncompromising and unquestioning obedience and subservience to Shoghi Effendi, which he was not ready to comply.

Baha'i authorities wanted to destroy the new-born movement. Even if Ahmad Sohrab would have appeared in front of the Local Board, they would have ordered him to shut the Society. Just that they would not have expelled him from the faith.

Ahmad Sohrab was excommunicated by the National Assembly and Shoghi Effendi. Now the National Assembly was behind the members of the New History Society. They threatened and forced the members to

leave the affiliation with the Society. The Baha'is who at one point had loved the idea of the New History Society were now afraid to even speak with its founders and got drifted away from the movement. A handful of supporters stood by the oath they had taken in front of the picture of the Master Abdu'l Baha and associated themselves openly with the Society. Some of the Baha'is remained in contact and used to meet the founders of the Society, although secretly, and at times send them a little bunch of flowers. The Baha'i organisation, with all its power over the Baha'is, could not break the bonds of affection and faith that existed in the heart of the believers.

Then came the Peace Movement. The founders progressed with a Peace shirt, calling themselves the Green International. They later started a newspaper with the same name. Green shirts were kept at the house, which were sold at cost and sent to many countries. The shirt was set up to rival the black shirt of Fascists and the brown shirt of the Nazis. During this period, The New Historian Publication came existence, which later became New History. The New Society knew what it wants and what are its goals.

Lewis and Ahmad at the head of our regiment
The parade halts at Madison Square and Fifth Ave.

Myself in the Green Shirt

People became a part of the Society with eagerness, although some remained for a while others stayed for life. Mr. John Peterson, an old time Baha'i, was always at the Society meetings. He contributed a lot for the

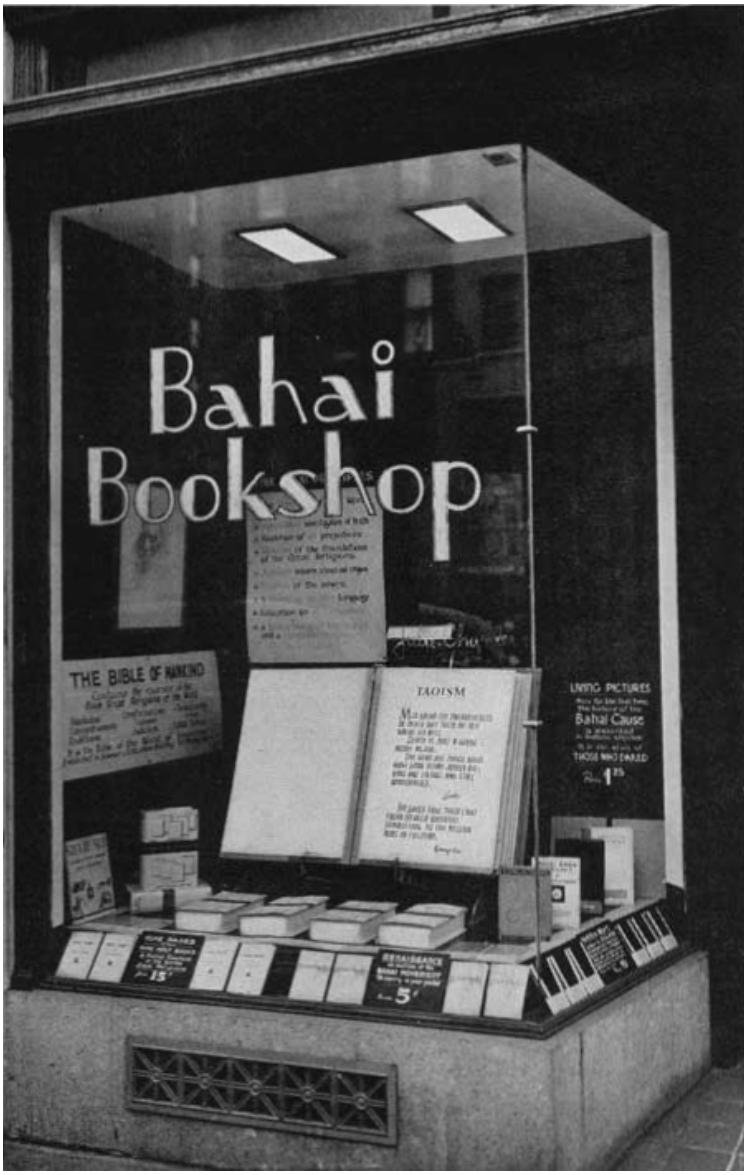
Cause. Mr. O. J. Hanko, also an early Baha'i, held to the Cause without reservations. Janet Osterman and her sister Claire always used to attend the meetings with radiant faces. Grace Kopman, an artist always stood by us through thick and thin. Anne Gemerd, a pretty Turkish girl never left us. Eugenie Slaydon loved the Cause with all the warmth of her nature, as did Mr. and Mrs. Charles Boyd to whom it was life itself. Sofia Froberg became part of the Society and of everything it did. Taylor Graves, an actor who was also a Charter Member of the New History Society, and his wife were unfailing friends of the Society. Outstanding among the members was Dr. Haridas T. Muzumber who accompanied Gandhi on the March to the Sea. The Society trusted in his mental integrity and knew him as an ally. With the Society was also Dr. Elfride Hesse who took the Cause with heart and hand by spreading its principles in many directions.

In the year 1935, on April 6, Saturday, being the 6th Anniversary of the Movement, a new Caravan Hall was opened. It looked beautiful, and for the members of the Society it was a great occasion.

Baha'i Literature in several languages were made to reach numberless institutions and homes, and the young people were catching at the thought of the Caravan as a link to unite them the world over. The Society started its own paper, The Children's Caravan. Since the office work required a lot of energy, the New History Society took a back seat and the members were now known with their work for the Caravan.

Sohrab arrives in Franfurt

One morning the Caravan House was served a legal notice by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, that the Caravan has no right to use the designation Baha'i Bookshop on the windowpane of the little store because the word Baha'i is registered in the US Patent Office, No. 245,271. The Caravan was therefore advised to discontinue use of the word Baha'i, not only on the show window but also on all the Caravan publications as well. Sixteen months later, on March 31, 1941, the Supreme Court of New York State declared that the plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion and the defendants have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their activities.



On March 2, 1942 one of the founders of the New History Society, Mr Lewis Stuyvesant Chandler left for the heavenly abode at the age of 72.

After the death of Mr. Lewis, the Caravan got into publishing some valuable books written by the founders and the members of the New History Society. The four most treasured addition being – Broken Silence, Abdu'l Baha's Grandson, The Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha – An Analysis, and The Story of the Divine Plan fall under the heading of controversial matters.

"At its height, just after World War II, the Caravan had grown to a membership of almost 250,000.... and its business soon overshadowed the New History Society." Chapter 15 An article in the New York Times, states that in 1949 the German contingent alone had 100,000 members.

With the close of World War II, the two defeated countries knocked at the door of the Caravan. Many young Germans and Japanese heard of the movement and the Caravan membership from these two countries amounted approximately to a quarter of million persons. The Caravan reached to Africa with outstanding membership. In Australia, New Zealand and England, the Caravan membership was small but excellent. India had some hardworking and powerful groups. The Caravan also established its roots in Pakistan.

The Caravan of East and West was established with Board of Directors and Mr. Greenwald as the Chairman.

Romany Marie, myself and Gwendolyn Smith at the dinner

On April 21, 1953, the Caravan opened the very first Baha'i building in New York.

Caravan House - January 1956
photo by Cesar Algen

Distinguished guests from the United Nation's Secretariat and Press, Caravan patrons and members, artists and musicians, and the library's architect were there to pay tribute to the idealism of Baha'u'llah, in whose name this small centre of knowledge was being dedicated.

Sohrab died in 1958 and Julia Chanler a few years later. The Caravan of East and West existed as late as 1967 when Peter Bloch was director.

Sohrab

The Caravan House still exists at the same address as when founded.

References:

1. “From Gaslight to Dawn”, an autobiography by Julia Chanler. New York: New History Foundation, 1956.
2. New York Times, March 6, 1949, pg 28
3. Abdu’l Baha’s Questioned Will & Testament by Ruth White, 1946

Hands may be black, white, yellow or brown, but the hue of the heart is one." The first foundation stone is the Jasper; it is clear red, like the hue of the heart. In ancient times it was called the bloodstone." – 'Abdu'l-Baha

"In every dispensation the light of divine guidance has been focused upon one central theme.... In this wondrous Revelation, this glorious center, the foundation of Faith of God and the distinguishing feature of His Law, is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind." – 'Abdu'l-Baha

"That which the lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of all the world is the union of all its people in one universal Cause, one common Faith. This can in no wise be achieved except through the power of a skilled, an all-powerful and inspired Physician. This, verily, is the truth, and all else naught but error." – Baha'u'llah

"God Himself does not compel the soul to become spiritual. The exercise of the free human will is necessary." – Baha'u'llah

"All must be free to seek out truth in their own way. The second foundation stone, the sapphire, is a clear blue, "true blue," and the color of faith, inspiration, loyalty and truth. Man must be free to soar in this "Dome of heavens blue truth," and see it with his own eyes." – 'Abdu'l-Baha

"O ye sons of intelligence! The thin eyelid prevents the eye from seeing the world and what is contained therein. Then think of the result when the curtain of greed over the sight of the heart! O people! The darkness of greed and envy obscures the light of the soul as the cloud prevents the penetration of the sun's rays." – Baha'u'llah

A – Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i and Sayyid Kazim ar-Rashti:

These were the first instructors to preach the impending dawn of a new era and the impending appearance of a new Manifestation. Additionally, they preached that He will unify everyone under one cause.

B – The Bab:

One of Sayyid Kazim Rashti's disciples named Mulla Husayn Bushrui was informed in 1844 by the Bab (also known as the Gate) that the Bab was a manifestation of God with a shorter dispensation. Through the phrase "He Whom God Shall Manifest," he foretold the arrival of Baha'u'llah. The Bab was placed in the penitentiary and swiftly transferred to two other facilities. The regime murdered and tortured his supporters. The Bab Himself was finally put to death in Tabriz's main plaza.

C – Baha'u'llah:

The Bab's disciple, Baha'u'llah (whose name means "Glory of God"), was born. After the Bab's passing, Baha'u'llah was imprisoned in Tehran's Dark Pit in 1853, where he was given the Revelation from God to launch His Mission. Baha'u'llah went into a self-imposed exile into the highlands upon his release and exile to Baghdad. The Babi community was becoming more and more uncivilised without leaders. The true leadership has always centred on Him, despite the Bab having named Mirza Yahya, Baha'u'llah's half-brother, as a symbolic leader. The people eventually found Him and pleaded with Him to come back. In the Garden of Ridvan (Baghdad, Iraq), Baha'u'llah officially announced His adoption of the Prophetic role in 1863 and proclaimed Himself to be the Promised One of the Bab and all major world faiths. Following this, He was exiled to the prison city of Akka in the Holy Land before being sent to Constantinople, Adrianople, and lastly the Holy Land. He composed several volumes of His Scriptures during this era while imprisoned there for 35 years. He was placed under house arrest near the end of his life in the Bahji home. There He passed away in the year 1892.

D – Abdu'l Baha:

In His own lifetime, Baha'u'llah chose Abdu'l Baha to serve as the authorised translator of the Writings and the heart of His Covenant. All Baha'is look to Him for direction and continue to be one. The Master spent a portion of His life in prison with Baha'u'llah and embraced His father's Prophethood when He was just 9 years old. After being set free by the Young Turk Revolution, Abdu'l Baha journeyed to Europe and America in 1912 to give lectures. During this time his secretary and interpreter was Mirza Ahmad Sohrab. He passed away in the year 1921.

E – Ruth White and Zimmer Hermann:

The Free Baha'i faith was initially inspired by Lady Ruth White. Hermann Zimmer and Ruth White both dedicated their entire lives to advancing the Cause and disseminating the authentic teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha. The New History Society members, Lewis and Julia Chanler, Mirza Ahmed Sohrab, Master Abdu'l Baha's secretary and interpreter, and Ruth White all strove to promote the faith throughout the United States and its neighbouring nations. Hermann was primarily focused on promoting the faith in Germany along with Dr. Herrigel, a founding member of the German Baha'i community. The teachings of Baha'u'llah and Master Abdul Baha were imparted to the populace. Shoghi Effendi nevertheless closely monitored the New History Society's operations.

He expelled the New History Society's founders gradually out of fear of their rising membership and popularity. Additionally, he initiated a lawsuit in opposition to the New History Society's attempt to copyright the term "Baha'i." And fortunately, the 'Guardian' lost the lawsuit. Since she was raised a Christian, Lady Ruth made a big effort to convert influential Christians to the Baha'i faith. She also met Mehar Baba and his students while campaigning for the cause, but sadly, her life could not sustain her, thus she left the movement to go to her ultimate home.

Through divine revelation, Lady Ruth and Hermann Zimmer came to the conclusion that Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of Abdu'l Baha, had fraudulently used Abdu'l Baha's Will to establish himself in the position of Guardianship. Shoghi Effendi ignored Abdu'l Baha's statement that "This religion could not be compressed into an Organisation." and transformed the most apolitical religion on earth into a political religion. The spirit of the religion of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha was entirely absent from the administration that Shoghi established. Being a power-hungry individual who turned into a global dictator for himself, he expelled every member of the Baha'i family, even his own parents. He rejected "Independent examination of the Truth," the cornerstone of the Baha'i Faith, and referred to Baha'is as "Harmful Elements," "Enemies," or "Crazy." Following Shoghi Effendi's passing, so-called Hands of the Cause assumed control of the religion. They then established the Universal House of Justice to oversee Baha'is all over the world. As a result, the Faith's true character was lost, and it was reduced to nothing more than an administrative framework.

F – COVENANT OF BAHA'U'LLAH

After a thousand/s years, the Baha'u'llah's foretold successor will manifest. This is the Covenant that Baha'u'llah established. To avoid any disagreements, Abdu'l Baha must be contacted before the establishment of the Universal House of Justice.

G – CURRENT POSITION

The Free Baha'is of today are spread out around the globe. Countries including Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, India, Iran, Israel, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the United States are home to them. Even though they are few in number, they are actively pursuing the authentic teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha in the anticipation of the formation of the real "House of Justice," which would put an end to all conflicts, one day.

How can the UHJ function without a Guardian?

All divine religions irrespective of time or place of origin are of the agreeable view that Laws and codes of religion are sent directly by God through an infallible being who in turn is appointed by God. However according to the corrupted beliefs of the Heterodox Baha'is (administration centric Baha'is), the decisions of a few fallible people—who themselves have been appointed (or supposedly elected, although that calls for a separate discussion) by another group of fallibles—are free from errors and are empowered to make decisions which have the same force as the commandment from God.

This faulty logic can be summarised as –

A Fallible Group Appointed by a Fallible Group = Infallible Group

It is rationally unacceptable to believe that a group of error prone individuals will always reach an error-free judgment. However, the said Baha'is believe in the absolute correctness of the decisions of the UHJ (in what appears to be a case of excessive exposure to the desert sun).

Now the problem is that this commonly held belief goes right in the face of the Instructions of the So called Guardian. According to the so-called Guardian, one of the duties of the Guardian of the Cause is to expel those members of the UHJ who are found to be sinful or working against the cause, as has been quoted below –

"Should any of the members commit a sin, injurious to the common weal, the guardian of the Cause of God hath at his own discretion the right to expel him, whereupon the people must elect another one in his stead,"

Reference: Shoghi Effendi, Bahā'ī Administration, p. 10.

According to these strict orders given by Shoghi Effendi, the UHJ can be legitimate only if it is under the governance and supervision of the Guardian of the Cause of God and consequently the Baha'i creed will only remain safe and impregnable from corruption and deviation if and only if the Guardian is present and obeyed.

Master `Abdu'l-Bahā in his Will clearly states this fact, which should be read very carefully.

"The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the Guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsān, the Afnān, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the Guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him."

Reference: `Abdu'l-Bahā, The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā, p. 11.

The Guardianship is inseparable from the UHJ and all the Baha'is, including the members of the UHJ are bound to obey him. **But the question is, how can there exist a UHJ in the absence of a Guardian?**

Thus we, the Free Baha'is believe that the UHJ in its current form is invalid. Master Abdu'l Baha was the last Guardian of the faith and Shoghi Effendi was never appointed as a Guardian by Abdu'l Baha. Rather, his successorship was later forged into the Will by Lady Munirih, the mother of Shoghi, after the death of the Master.

The right to usage of the term “Baha’i” by the Free Baha’is

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab was Secretary to Abdul Baha [from 1912 to 1919] and also served as his translator. After the passing of Abdul Baha in 1921, Ahmad took upon himself to spread the teachings of the faith and he did so quite extensively. He visited the United States as part of his mission to spread the word of Abdul Baha and propagate the Faith. It was here in the United states that Ahmad met a faithful Baha’i lady – Mrs Julie Chanler.

Mrs. Chanler also shared the Zeal of Ahmad in preaching the faith and making the people aware of the words of Bahaullah and Abdul Baha. Thereafter Mrs Chanler along with Ahmad Sohrab began teaching the faith by holding prayer meetings, classes etc. From these activities they received a strong response and were blessed with many new followers of the faith. Their success in the United States was so formidable that a large part of the Faithful in the United States could relate to their work.

Together they formed the New History Society for the purpose of spreading the Divine Words. Under the flag of this society they planned to selflessly and sincerely spread the Faith without restrictions and discrimination. This effort was the continuation of their already strong work in the domain of spreading the Faith.

However, as is seen with all selfless acts, the success of Ahmad Sohrab and Mrs Chandler in spreading the Faith roused jealousy amongst a few hypocrite Baha’is, who had comfortably occupied positions in the Administration but had never sacrificed for the spreading of the Faith and felt threatened by the success of The New History Society. Chief amongst them was, the Secretary of the NSA of the United States and Canada, Mr. Horrace Holley who in connivance with the “guardian” Shoghi Effendi sent a letter to Ahmad Sohrab demanding that he conduct all activities of the New History Society subservient to the Baha’i administration, particularly the NSA of the United States and Canada.

The intent behind this letter was to clamp down the activities of Ahmad Sohrab and the New History Society and limit their efforts of spreading the Faith. The administration feared that the increasing popularity and success of New History Society would eclipse their supposed authority and influence over the Faithful Baha’is.

However, Ahmad Sohrab maintained his resolve and refused to be subservient to the arms of the administration and denied any reporting of his efforts of preaching the faith to any administrative body. As expected, the "administration" used their cheapest tool and very conveniently excommunicated the secretary of Abdul Baha, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, simply for preaching the words of Bahaullah and Abdul Baha and resisting all efforts to control his zeal of spreading the faith by the administration governed by Shoghi Effendi.

Despite facing "excommunication" from the faith, Ahmad Sohrab never lost hope and continued his efforts spreading the teachings of His Master to the World. As a re-doubled effort towards preaching the faith, Julie and Ahmad started a bookshop in New York on November 7th, 1939 and named it 'Baha'i Bookshop', as expected, since they were selling books containing literature related to the Baha'i faith containing the words of Bahaullah and Abdul Baha. They had signed a lease for the shop for a period of six months.

However, on December 5th, 1939 they received a desist notice from the legal firm 'Watson, Bristol, Johnson & Leavenworth'. The notice stated that the NSA of the United States and Canada had objected to their usage of the word "Baha'i" for their bookshop. The notice further stated that the word "Baha'i" was a registered trademark and could be used only by the administration bound Baha'i faith. The notice demanded them to cease their using of the word "Baha'i" thereafter for any activities, printing materials etc. by them.

In response to the notice, Mrs. Chanler placed the matter in the hands of Mr. Fred J. Bechert, of the firm Mitchell & Bechert. He responded to the letter dated December 21st, 1939, simply mentioning that the word "Baha'i" could be used by anyone following the words and teachings of Bahaullah, and that it was not mandatory for a person to be under the administration in order to use it. He also stated the example of the word Christian which was used by followers of Christ till date irrespective of their subsequent beliefs or creeds. He also mentioned that the sole purpose of the bookshop and the New History Society was to spread the Baha'i cause and had no commercial intention.

In response to the above, they received a reply dated December 22nd, 1939 objecting further that use of the name "Baha'i Bookshop" constitutes trademark infringement and unfair competition. It further alleged that the use of trade name Baha'i bookshop was a misrepresentation and deceptive because it gave the erroneous impression that the book shop is operated or sponsored by the administration, the "official" Bahai religious organization, and that the use of the name Bahai Bookshop without their consent also infringes on their property rights over the name Baha'i.

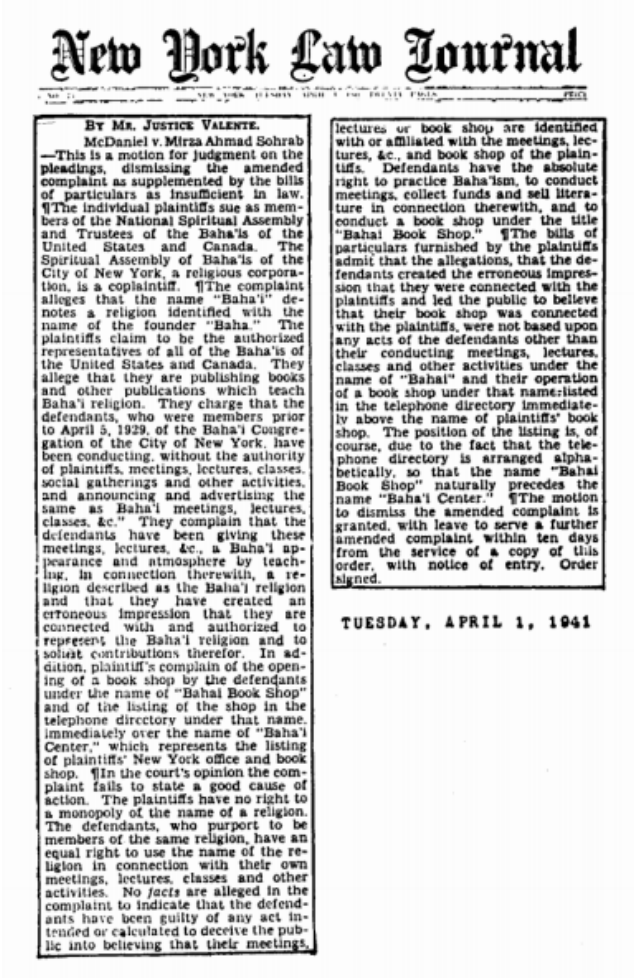
Mr. Fred replied stating that Mrs. Chanler denies that the use of the trade name "Bahai Bookshop" is either a misrepresentation or a deceptive use. As stated, the Bahai Bookshop represents that it specializes in Baha'i literature and, as a matter of fact, Mrs. Chanler is herself a Bahai. He further mentioned that the Baha'i bookshop did not give any erroneous impression, that the shop is operated or sponsored by the administration, since it has no exclusive right to the name "Bahai" to describe a follower of the Bahai teachings or to identify those teachings in book form or otherwise.

Based on the above stated exchanges, Ahmad Sohrab drew and stated the understated points of inference:

1. That the NSA of US and Canada had made a trademark of the name "Baha'i".
2. That according to the text of application filed March 10, 1928 Serial No. 262,923 the Bahai Organization is a corporation.
3. That the NSA has been using the word "Baha'i" as a trademark since 1900 and further wanted to patent the name "Baha'i" under the United States Patent Office.
4. That the goods and merchandise sold by the NSA using that trademark, were the words of Bahaullah and Abdul Baha. In other words, the NSA commercialised the words of the Manifestation of God they believed in.

5. However, Bahaullah and Abdul Baha suffered great atrocities in order to spread their teachings, free of cost and without restriction for the unification of mankind, and not for the NSA to monopolize and trademark them.
6. Ahmad challenged the members of the NSA of US and Canada to start a bookshop of a similar kind if they really wished to, and if they were ready to bear losses as well.
7. That the Bahai organization is not a religion, nor a spiritual renaissance, nor the spirit of the age, but is a full- fledged corporation which, while it engages itself in marketing the principles of Bahaullah for the establishment of Universal Peace, through its various branches in the United States, Canada and in other parts of the world, had protected these goods by taking out a trade-mark on the very name which more than twenty thousand Persian men and women claimed at the price of their lives. It was the first Instance in the history of religion where the privilege of calling oneself a follower of a certain Faith, had been involved with the interests of a trust or corporation.

In February 1940, the NSA (Baha'i Administration) decided to take legal action against the Baha'i Faithful i.e. the New History Society. However, the decision handed down in the Supreme Court of New York by Justice Louis A. Valente on April 1, 1941, crushed their false vanity and was an epoch-making document for, although it refers specifically to the Bahai Administration and The New History Society, its contents have universal application. Eloquently the court denied to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York a monopoly on the word "Baha'i". It stated that any sincere seeker of truth, who has realized its highest aspirations in the Bahai Cause, can term himself a follower of Bahaullah and use his name without let or hindrance. No one can molest him or try to undermine his service in the movement.



New York Law Journal

BY MR. JUSTICE VALENTE.

McDaniel v. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab —This is a motion for judgment on the pleadings, dismissing the amended complaint as supplemented by the bills of particulars as insufficient in law. ¶The individual plaintiffs sue as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. The Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the City of New York, a religious corporation, is a coplaintiff. ¶The complaint alleges that the name "Baha'i" denotes a religion identified with the name of the founder "Baha." The plaintiffs claim to be the authorized representatives of all of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. They allege that they are publishing books and other publications which teach Baha'i religion. They charge that the defendants, who were members prior to April 5, 1929, of the Baha'i Congregation of the City of New York, have been conducting, without the authority of plaintiffs, meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings and other activities, and announcing and advertising the same as Baha'i meetings, lectures, classes, &c." They complain that the defendants have been giving these meetings, lectures, &c., a Baha'i appearance and atmosphere by teaching, in connection therewith, a religion described as the Baha'i religion and that they have created an erroneous impression that they are connected with and authorized to represent the Baha'i religion and to solicit contributions therefor. In addition, plaintiff's complain of the opening of a book shop by the defendants under the name of "Bahai Book Shop" and of the listing of the shop in the telephone directory under that name, immediately over the name of "Baha'i Center," which represents the listing of plaintiffs' New York office and book shop. ¶In the court's opinion the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities. No *facts* are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with or affiliated with the meetings, lectures, &c., and book shop of the plaintiffs. Defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism, to conduct meetings, collect funds and sell literature in connection therewith, and to conduct a book shop under the title "Bahai Book Shop." ¶The bills of particulars furnished by the plaintiffs admit that the allegations, that the defendants created the erroneous impression that they were connected with the plaintiffs and led the public to believe that their book shop was connected with the plaintiffs, were not based upon any acts of the defendants other than their conducting meetings, lectures, classes and other activities under the name of "Bahai" and their operation of a book shop under that name listed in the telephone directory immediately above the name of plaintiffs' book shop. The position of the listing is, of course, due to the fact that the telephone directory is arranged alphabetically, so that the name "Bahai Book Shop" naturally precedes the name "Baha'i Center." ¶The motion to dismiss the amended complaint is granted, with leave to serve a further amended complaint within ten days from the service of a copy of this order, with notice of entry. Order signed.

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1941

Through the decision of Judge Valente, the Bahai Cause was re-conferred upon mankind. The incident took its place in the annals of Baha'i history, that Mrs. Chanler and Ahmad Sohrab did not seek this lawsuit nor

was it instituted by them. The differences of opinion between the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada together with the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York and them, were brought before the public and inserted in legal records through no desire on their part.

A minister of a New York church struck a universal note in a letter to the New History Society thus: “I feel that this is a victory for us all, since it involves a decision rendered by Justice Valente”.

The Supreme Court judgement gave the New History Society and their likes the following five freedoms, which are valid till the existence of mankind:

1. Freedom to practice the Baha’i Faith
2. Freedom to conduct meetings under the Baha’i name,
3. Freedom to collect funds under the Baha’i name,
4. Freedom to sell literature in connection to the Baha’i faith and the teachings of Bahaullah and Abdul Baha,
5. Freedom to conduct a book shop under the title of “Bahai Book Shop”.

Ahmad Sohrab added a note after taking note of the judgement:

“Henceforth the National Spiritual Assembly cannot claim as it has up to this time, that it is the sole representative of all the Bahais in the land. There are now, and will be in increasing numbers, Bahais who would not think it appropriate to be represented by the National Spiritual Assembly, and whom the National Spiritual Assembly would not think it appropriate to represent. The laws of this nation will be the practical guarantee of such Bahais, who will turn their hearts to God in the service of Bahaullah and Abdul Baha, without benefit of clergy.”

The name Bahai Book Shop was then listed in the telephone directory of the Borough of Manhattan, New York City directly over the name of the Administration controlled Bahai Centre due to the alphabetical sequence, which might have further aggravated the disappointment of the administration, as it gave the book store resemblance and association to them.

Even today, after more than 75+ years, the circumstances have not changed much. Although the Baha’i administration might today not try to trademark the word “Baha’i” after such humiliation in the past, but it certainly does try to deem Baha’is not under administration, as misguided ones, trouble-makers, Covenant-breakers, enemies of the faith etc.

But in this game of name calling, it would bode well for them if they name themselves as “Haifan Baha’is” since they have their “Supreme” administrative body in Haifa-Israel and are subservient to orders from there without any individual application of Baha’i spiritual laws and let the True believers in the Laws and divine teachings be called as Baha’is.

– **Alex C** (guest article by one of the faithful from America)

Link to Alex’s blog: https://mirza-ahmad-sohrab.blogspot.com

Humanity is more important than religion: Abdu'l Baha

During World War I, Abdu'l Baha had a busy time in ministering to the material and spiritual wants of the people about Him. He personally organized extensive agricultural operations near Tiberias, thus securing a great supply of wheat, by means of which famine was averted, not only for the Baha'is but for hundreds of the poor of all religions in Haifa and Akka, whose wants He liberally supplied. He took care of all, and mitigated their sufferings as far as possible. To hundreds of poor people, He would give a small sum of money daily. In addition to money He gave bread. If there was no bread He would give dates or something else. He made frequent visits to Akka to comfort and help the believers and poor people there. During the time of war, He had daily meetings of the believers, and through His help the friends remained happy and tranquil throughout those troublous years.

(*Baha'u'llah and the New Era, p. 63****)***

Abdu'l Baha in his entire life never claimed any special station for himself, beyond the station of servant. When the British government knighted him for his efforts averting famine during the war, he declined to be called Sir, and simply continued giving food to the hungry, tender care to the sick and warm clothes to the homeless. He humbly encouraged others to selflessly act as servants to God by being servants to God's creation, humanity.

He explained that the Baha'i Faith called us all to bring about peace, unity and love:

"My admonition and exhortation to you is this: Be kind to all people, love humanity, consider all mankind as your relations and servants of the most-high God. Strive day and night that animosity and contention may pass away from the hearts of men, that all religions shall become reconciled and the nations love each other so that no racial, religious or political prejudice may remain and the world of humanity behold God as the beginning and end of all existence. God has created all, and all return to God. Therefore, love humanity with all your heart and soul. If you meet a poor man, assist him; if you see the sick, heal him; reassure the affrighted one, render the cowardly noble and courageous, educate the ignorant, associate with the stranger. Emulate God. Consider how kindly, how lovingly He deals with all, and follow His example. You must treat people in accordance with the divine precepts — in other words, treat them as

kindly as God treats them, for this is the greatest attainment possible for the world of humanity."

(Abdu'l Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 290)

Keeping the above incident and the Master's quote in mind, we the Free Baha'is invite all the Baha'I friends around the world to use their Huququ'llah money for the betterment of the society, instead of giving it in the hands which are not liable to collect them. By doing this, we all can in fact work on the footsteps of Baha'u'llah and the Master and play a leading role in spreading the Baha'i religion around the world.

This article has been sourced from The Caravan Magazine, Volume 3, Edition 2. Click here to download the magazine for free!

Is the current form of UHJ a Divine Institution?

The s-elected Baha'i leaders in Haifa call themselves "the Universal House of Justice." But do they actually meet the definition of this Divine Institution?

Abdu'l Baha has said, "In all countries a secondary House of Justice must be instituted, and these secondary Houses of Justice must elect the members of the Universal one." Abdu'l Baha (Will and Testament, p. 14.)

Presently, there is no secondary or national House of Justice anywhere in the world. Only provisional institutions called "Spiritual Assemblies" can exist, according to the decree of the global Baha'i leadership. These assemblies cannot be considered secondary Houses of Justice operating under a different name, because they are currently denied the authority to exercise many of the rights and powers ordained for the true Baha'i legislative bodies.

How then can there be a UHJ elected according to scriptural requirements?

Even if the secondary Houses of Justice were allowed to exist in each country of the world, there still could not be a properly constituted Universal House of Justice, because the Guardian is supposed to be part of this institution.

- "The Guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred head and the distinguished member for life of that body [the Universal House of Justice]. Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him." (Abd'ul-Baha. Will and Testament, p. 14.)
- "Though the Guardian of the faith has been made the permanent head of so august a body [the Universal House of Justice] he can never, even temporarily, assume the right of exclusive legislation. He cannot override the decision of the majority of his fellow-members, but is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning and to depart from the spirit of Baha'ullah's revealed utterances. He interprets what has been specifically revealed, and

cannot legislate except in his capacity as member of the Universal House of Justice." (Rabbani, Shoghi Effendi. The World Order of Baha'u'llah, p. 150.)

Furthermore, the so-called Guardian Shoghi Effendi has also specifically stated that the Universal House of Justice is inseparable from the Guardianship. In the absence of the Guardianship, the Baha'i leaders could create any kind of provisional administrative institution, as long as they do not call it the "Universal House of Justice" and claim the infallible authority of this sacred body.

Considering these verses from Shoghi Effendi, do the Baha'i leaders have a right to demand that the Baha'is regard them as the true Universal House of Justice, with all the weighty implications of such a status?

- "the inseparable institutions of the Guardianship and of the Universal House of Justice" (Rabbani, Shoghi Effendi. Citadel of Faith, p. 76.)
- "Acting in conjunction with each other these two inseparable institutions [the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice] administer its [the Faith's] affairs, coordinate its activities, promote its interests, execute its laws and defend its subsidiary institutions." (Rabbani, Shoghi Effendi. The World Order of Baha'u'llah, p. 148.)

Also, can the so-called Baha'i Leaders explain the following terms from the Holy Scriptures of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha?

- **Universal House of Justice (without Guardian)**
- **International Teaching Centre**
- **Continental Board of Counsellors**
- **Auxiliary Board Members (ABM)**
- **Assistant ABM**
- **National Spiritual Assemblies**
- **Local Spiritual Assemblies**
- **Rohi Institute**

MASON REMEY CRITICIZED SHOGHI EFFENDI CALLING HIM A SICK SOUL

Mason Remey criticizing Shoghi Effendi had said Shoghi Effendi was a very “confused and “sick soul” he was “ego maniac”. He flaunted and disobeyed the laws of the Aqdas and created all this confusion himself and that he (Shoghi Effendi) was guardian of the Babi religion and was not the guardian of the Baha’i faith. Speaking of his administration as a Babi, rather than Baha’i, administration.

Remey became intrigued, particularly, by two passages from Shoghi Effendi’s, The Dispensation of Baha’u’llah.

The first one was Shoghi Effendi’s announcement that “upon the 23″ of May of this auspicious year [1934], the Baha’i World will celebrate the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Faith of Baha’u’llah.” The 90 years would be from 1844, when the Bab declared his mission.

The second passage occurs on page 57:

The sacred and youthful branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, as well as the Universal House of Justice to be universally elected and established, are both under the care and protection of the Abha Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of the Exalted One (the Bab) (may my life be offered up for them both) whatsoever they decide is of God. (Shoghi Effendi, The Dispensation of Baha’u’llah, p. 57)

Remey reasoned from these passages that Shoghi Effendi had built his administration around the Babi religion, since (according to Remey) the Babi and Baha’i faiths are distinct:

The Babi Dispensation was but 19 years and was ended and completed with the Declaration of Baha’u’llah in 1863 in the Garden of Ridvan at Baghdad.

The Babi Faith and the Baha’i Faith are two distinct and different religions — this was not made clear in the forming of the Administration of the Faith that was formed about the Babi Religion instead of the Baha’i Faith. In other words… The first Guardian of the Faith so construed the Master Abdu’l Baha’s Will and Testament that he formed bis Administration upon the Babi Faith and not upon the Baha’i Faith.

(The Guardian’s Letter, Vol. 1, No. 2 [December, 1966], p. 1; the ellipsis after “Jn other words” appears in the letter.)

Because Shoghi Effendi had “so construed” ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s will and testament, Mason Remey believed something had to be done to correct matters. Hence, his formation of the Abha World Faith: This mistake (Shoghi Effendi’s building his administration upon the Babi religion] has caused so much confusion and misunderstanding and trouble that the only thing for the second Guardian to do, to set matters aright, is to discard all which Shoghi Effendi did and to institute a New Faith which shall be the Orthodox Faith under the Holy Name of ABHA in order to carry out the conditions that will lead to the establishment of the TRUE Baha’i Faith (of Baha’u’llah) which Faith has not yet been established in the world. (Ibid)

Four paragraphs later in the same letter:

In my general letter to the Baha’i World, both Pro and Sans Guardian, of January 1967 | explain at leagth how the First Guardian Shoghi Effendi built his Administration about the Babi Faith and not about the Baha’i Faith. Shoghi Effendi was a very confused soul. He was an ego maniac. He flaunted and disobeyed the laws of the Aqdas and created all this confusion himself. Therefore, the only thing for me to do has been to

explain the condition in my letters to the Friends telling them frankly that the first step is to wipe out and to efface everything that Shoghi Effendi did and then to inaugurate a new Faith based upon the teachings of Baha'u'llah (and not upon the Bab).

(Source: The Caravan Magazine, Vol. 6, Edition 1)

Mrs. Ruth White – A Devoted Baha'i

Mrs. Ruth White was an influential and a devoted Baha'i. She met Abdu'l Baha in Boston in 1912, and who twice visited him shortly before his death in Haifa, became an enthusiastic admirer and disciple of the Master. When 'Abdu'l Baha died in November, 1921, a cable signed by the sister of Abdu'l Baha was received in America in January, 1922, stating that Shoghi Efendi had been appointed in the Will as "Guardian of the Cause and Head of the House of Justice." This news came to Mrs. White and other in America "like a thunder bolt out of a blue sky," for they had never heard Abdu'l Baha say anything about appointing a successor. After four weeks a typed copy of the Will was received in America, undated and unsigned. As Mrs. White studied this document she eventually came to realize that it contained laws which, in her opinion, would change completely the Baha'i teaching. Of these she mentions the following: (1)

First

The appointment of a continual line of successors or popes for a thousand years who are to control man's conscience....

Second

These successors are to be supreme dictators over the House of Justice

Thirdly

The taxes....which were to be paid to the House of Justice are to be paid to Shoghi Efendi.

Fourthly

There was to be no organization of the religion itself, and no paid officials or priest- craft, yet despite this the Baha'is, at the dictation of Shoghi Effendi, have incorporated the Baha'i Religion and are trying to control it through a more bigoted priest-craft than almost any other in existence."

As time passed Mrs. White became convinced that this alleged Will could not be authentic. She therefore requested Mr. Holley and Mr. Mills, the chief men in the American Baha'i Administration, to submit a photographic copy of the Persian original to an expert and get his opinion. They did not dc: this. So Mrs. White herself, at great personal expense and trouble, went to England in 1928 and succeeded in acquiring a

photographic copy of the Will, and gave it to a recognized expert to examine. While in England she discovered that there "the administration of Shoghi Effendi has brought chaos to the Baha'i Cause. Lady Bloomfield(2).....said there was practically no longer a Baha'i Cause in England,"(3) The handwriting expert for the British Museum, Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, after long and careful study, on June 3, 1930 wrote a detailed report to Mrs. White, in which he stated: "A minute comparison of the authenticated writing [of Abdu'l Baha] with the writing on every page of the alleged will....has failed to detect in any part of the will the characteristics of the writing of 'Abdu'l Baha." (4)

In four of her books and pamphlets (5) Mrs. White professed complete devotion to Abdu'l-Baha, but brought a most scathing indictment against his grandson and the Baha'i Administration. Later, however, it seems that Mrs. White transferred her devotion from Abdu'l-Baha to a man in India named Mehr Baba, who had a considerable following as a result of maintaining unbroken silence since the year 1925, and in 1957 she wrote enthusiastically about visiting her new hero. It is reported that in 1969 Mrs. White, at the age of 100 went to India "to take Mehr Baba's Darshan." (6)

Regarding Mrs. White's efforts to prove that the Will was a forgery, Shoghi Effendi wrote as follows: (7)

"The agitation provoked by a deluded woman who strove diligently both in the United States and in England to demonstrate the unauthenticity of the Charter....and even to induce the civil authorities of Palestine to take legal action in the matter – a request which to her great chagrin was curtly refused as well as the defection of one of the earliest pioneers and founders of the Faith in Germany whom that same woman had so tragically misled, produced no effect whatsoever."

It is evident that whatever the merits of the case were, the civil authorities of Palestine would be unable to take any action on a Will which had not been probated. Accordingly, the Baha'i administration, unwilling to submit the Will for a probate, and unhappy that anyone should undertake an "independent investigation of truth" as to the authenticity of the Will, did nothing but denounce the investigator and ignore her charges .

While some like Mrs. White had their doubts as to the authenticity of the Will, there were others who accepted the Will as authentic, but were unhappy about the way in which the Guardian used the authority which the Will had bestowed upon him. Among these were two devoted Baha'is, one an American and the other an Iranian. As their story is instructive it will be told in some detail.

Mr. Hermann Zimmer (8) one of the pioneers of the Baha'i Faith in Germany, proved his devotion to the Cause by going at his own expense, and at the risk of his life, to Berlin during World War II, in an attempt to have the ban on Baha'is removed, but he did not succeed. He has stated that his friend Mr. Wilhelm Herrigel, also one of the Baha'i pioneers in Germany, was not "misled" by Mrs. White, as Shoghi Effendi stated, but came to the same conclusion by independent study of the evidence, and as a result, formed the "Free Baha'is" with a number of members who rebelled against the Guardian and the Baha'i Organization. Mr. Zimmer also is opposed to what he calls "Baha'i totalitarianism," and has written extensively against it. (Letters from Mr. Zimmer to J. Anthony Sistrom).

The Baha'i Religion and its Enemy the Baha'i Organization, by Ruth White, The Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont 1929.

Author of The Chosen Highway, Baha'i Publishing Trust.

'Abdu'l Baha and the Promised Age, by Ruth White, 1927, Appendix, p. 17.

'Abdu'l Baha's Alleged Will is Fraudulent, by Ruth White, 1930, p. 16.

Some years later Mrs. White wrote yet another book, Baha'i Leads Out of the Labyrinth, 1944, which is

similar to ‘Abdu’l Baha and the Promised Age.

Letter from Mollie Lux, Mehr Spiritual Center, Myrtle Beach, S.C., to J. Anthony Sistrom. It is reported that Mehr Baba died in 1969.

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MY DECLARATION TO THE FREE BAHA'IS – GUEST ARTICLE

Allah-u-Abha my dear friends,

I had deemed you'll covenant breakers and used to ignore your newsletters which I had subscribed long back thinking that you'll are Baha'is. However, after going through your magazines and seeing your faith and belief I am sure that you'll are true believers in the covenant of Baha'u'llah.

Also, per our previous correspondence, I have gone ahead and read the books which you'll had sent me. After reading those books, I am now getting an understanding about the hypocrisy of Shoghi Effendi.

I declare my faith the Free Baha'i Faith and submit to its teaching.

Below are some points which I have taken out from the books available which you'll had sent and it made me understand that Shoghi Effendi was not someone from the side of God. He was merely a selfish human being:

1. Shoghi Effendi was happy with the killing of Baha'is:

Page 528 of book 'The Messiah of Shiraz' by Denis Martin MacEoin states:

Writing in August 1955 to the American Bahāʾīs, Shoghi Effendi, having described the recent persecutions in Iran and the appeals made to the United Nations to intervene there, goes on to say that 'seldom, if at any time since its inception, has such a widespread publicity been accorded the infant Faith of God, now at long last emerging from an obscurity which has so long and so grievously oppressed it. . . . To the intensification of such a publicity . . . the American Bahāʾī Community . . . must fully and decisively contribute'.

In the following year, referring again to the Iranian persecution, he speaks of the provision of funds for the hire of 'an expert publicity agent, in order to reinforce the publicity already being received in the public press'.

2. Similar approach by UHJ:

The same approach can be observed some thirty years later. In a letter written in January 1982, the Bahāʾī 'Universal House of Justice' notes that 'current persecution has resulted in bringing the name and character of our beloved Faith to the attention of the world as never before in its history. . . . The world's leading newspapers, followed by the local press, have presented sympathetic accounts of the Faith to millions of readers, while television and radio stations are increasingly making the persecutions in Iran the subject of their programmes', while some months later, the same body states that 'the effect of these developments (i.e. the persecutions in Iran) is to offer such golden opportunities for teaching and further proclamation as can only lead, if vigorously and enthusiastically seized, to large scale conversion and an increasing prestige'. That such methods have not, to the knowledge of the present writer, evoked protests within the Bahāʾī community, is an important indication of how far the goals of publicity and conversion have now taken precedence over earlier ideals.

3. Shoghi Effendi excommunicated almost every member of Baha'u'llah's family for his selfish motives. And for reasons which were extremely kiddish.

4. Shoghi Effendi's hunger for money:

Under all circumstances Abdu'l Baha refused to accept money for himself or the cause he represented. When the Bahais of this country (USA) received word of his intended visit, the sum of eighteen thousand dollars was subscribed toward the expense of his journey. He was notified of this action and a part of the money forwarded to him by cable. He cabled in answer that the funds contributed by his friends could not be accepted, returned the money and instructed them to give their offering to the poor. – Refer to A FRAUDULENT TESTAMENT By Hermann Zimmer.

In the Shoghi Era, money played a much greater role. The entire relations were turned upside down from the time of Abdu'l Baha. Shoghi had certainly made many greater trips than Abdu'l Baha, yet he never stood with his followers and always played the mysterious stranger.

But in reference to money we are acquainted with his very important sayings:"It is the sacred obligation of every conscientious and faithful servant of Baha'u'llah, who desires to see His Cause advance, to contribute freely and generously for the increase of that Fund." (Shoghi Effendi, Bahai Administration, p. 41 f.)

"The supply of funds, in support of the National Treasury, constitutes, at the present time, the life-blood of those nascent Institutions which you are laboring to erect... I am eagerly and prayerfully awaiting the news of an unprecedented expansion in so vital an organ of the administrative Order ol the Fait." (Shoghi Effendi, Messages to America, 1947, p. 5)

5. The ethics and manners of Shoghi Effendi:

When Thornton Chase, editor of the excellent book The Bahai Revelation, visited Abdu'l Baha in Akka in April 1907; thus, still before the Revolution of the Young Turks, he reported later about it, "He (Abdu'l Baha) extends love to everyone; he draws near to them: ha invites them; he loves to serve them, even in little things. He demands no awe, no reverence, no separation ... no bar or restraint is there, but winsome love and attraction." (Thornton Chase, In Galilee, 1921, p. 30)

The minister of Community Church, New York, Dr. G. Haynes Holmes wrote about his meeting with Abdu'l Baha, "I had previously met Abdu'l Baha on the occasion of his visit to this country, had sat close to him, taken his hand, and conversed with him in most informal and friendly fashion."

The same pastor reports about his meeting with Shoghi Effendi, "I remember my astonishment when I was taken in the reception room, placed in the corner farthest removed from the door. Instructed that I must rise when Shoghi Effendi entered, and must under no circumstances approach his person . .. And here in Haifa I had to keep my distance, as though I were in the presence of some king or pope." (Sohrab, Grandson, 1943, p. 15f.)

6. Shoghi's interest in politics:

Let them willingly subject themselves to every just king, and to every generous ruler be good citizens. Let them obey the government and not meddle in political affairs but devote themselves to the betterment of character and behaviour and fix their gaze upon the Light of the world. – Abdu'l Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 318.

The above is the saying of Abdu'l Baha and his wife confesses the truth below –

The Priceless Pearl (London 1969) by Ruhiyyih Khanum:

"The Guardian was always keenly interested in political matters..." (p. 33).

"Shoghi Effendi had the qualities of true statesmanship" (p. 350).

“The Faith grew with us into something vastly different from what had existed before” (p. 437).

“Shoghi Effendi said the Cause of God would … become a state religion and eventually the Bahai state itself would emerge …” (p. 440)

7. Finally if the Guardian Shoghi Effendi was truthful then why did he refuse to give the copy of Will and Testament to Mrs. White?

Page 10 of ‘A FRAUDULENT TESTAMENT’ by Hermann Zimmer states:

On March 19, 1930 a letter was received by Shoghi from Mrs. White requesting the original document of the alleged last will of Abdu’l Baha for analysis by a handwriting expert who was familiar with Persian script. The receipt of the letter was acknowledged by Shoghi’s secretary however a reply never came.

8. I can understand the infallibility of Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l Baha however infallibility of Shoghi is really strange for me because I have met many UHJ members and even they confirmed that Guardian is divinely inspired but he is still prone to errors as he is not infallible.

I was shocked to read the below:

“Therefore, we might believe that he (the Guardian) will never err in the fulfilment of his functions and responsibilities in reference to the belief and can never err. Divine leadership means this, namely, to be endowed by God with Infallibility…” from Ruhiyyih Khanum, “Lehrprobleme”. quoted in “Bahai-Lehrbrief” 3/109, p.3

9. Hypocrisy of Shoghi Effendi:

There were three reasons for excommunicating Ruhi Effendi (Shoghi’s cousin and his secretary).

Reason 1: Ruhi’s sister married covenant breaker Fayzi.

Reason 2: Ruhi’s marriage.

Reason 3: Ruhi failed to obtain guardian’s permission for second visit to America.

Shoghi Effendi may have forgotten that he himself went for further studies to oxford even after Abdu’l Baha said no. – For this instance, refer to book ‘Abdu’l Baha’s Grandson – Ruhi Effendi Afnan’ by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab – 1943

So, after reading all this I became certain that there is something wrong in the leadership of Shoghi. It made me believe that the actual belief in Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l Baha is the only correct belief as after their death all problems and divisions started.

I now completely submit and declare my devotion to the Free Baha’i Faith.

Regards,

Mr. R Petersen

Nine or Nineteen Members in the Universal House of Justice? -A Debate in the Bahai Faith – Guest Article

When someone joins a religion, it will always be riddled with uncertainty for him or her rather than filled with faith. Even if one was born into the faith or grew up among the most devoted of friends and relatives, this is true. A religion journey is usually distinguished by great joy, astonishment, and exquisite camaraderie, as well as a great deal of doubt, difficulty, and grief.

Okay, so it's acknowledged that doubts are a natural component of religious beliefs, and when people have concerns, they strive to work through them, investigate them, and emerge stronger and more confident in their views. Perhaps there are good answers to your doubts, and as a result, your faith will be stronger and more solid. On the other hand, if you don't get any positive replies, you'll be forced to choose between sticking with a religion you know isn't logical and abandoning it in favor of ideas that are.

Now, imagine there are contradictions and incompatibilities in what one perceives to be true, only to discover later that it was all untrue and based on selfish gain? There is a laundry list of such items forced down Bahais' throats that are not supported by the Bahai Scriptures and are not founded on Bahaullah and Abdu'l Baha's teachings. Today, I'd want to look at one of the items on that list and compare it to the teachings of the Bahai faith's founders.

Among the many incompatibilities and inconsistencies in the Bahai Faith's beliefs, practices, and governance, such as the continuation of Guardianship, the authenticity of Abdu'l Baha's Will and Testament, the validity of the current Universal House of Justice, and the nonelection of women to the UHJ, to which the current Administration has provided no satisfactory answer, a new controversy is arising that will strike the foundations of the UHJ, and it is the number of members. For these integers that are diagonally opposite each other, we discover various references. Some sources claim 19, while others say between 9 and 19, and some state things that aren't specifically referenced in the Holy Scriptures.

The Bahai faith is unable to make decisions on a number of contentious problems, one of which being where nine should be used and where nineteen should be applied. There is a clear reference from Abdu'l Baha stating that the UHJ will have 19 members.

1- We can see that Abdu'l Baha clearly said that the UHJ will have 19 members.
The King and Rulers of the world will find their true authority under the ruling of House of Justice. The Laws of God will be vested in nineteen men who will compose the House of Justice and render decisions.... The House of Justice will decide between kings and kings. All judgment will be from the standpoint of God's law.

(Ten days in the light of Acca by Julite M. Grundy, Printed in Chicago December 1907. Published by Bahai Publishing Society Chicago, ILLIONIS, U.S.A. WORDS OF Abdu'l Baha)

2- The Present universal House of justice is advocating for membership between 9 and 19.
The number of members of the Universal House of Justice is not explicitly fixed at nine,[a] and in a Tablet 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated that the Universal House of Justice may function with up to nineteen members at its discretion.(b) (Ten days in the light of Acca by Julite M. Grundy, Printed in Chicago December 1907. Published by Bahai Publishing Society Chicago, ILLIONIS, U.S.A. WORDS OF Abdu'l Baha)

According to Ali Nakhjawani, Abdu'l Baha claimed that the number "might be 19," and that he justifies this by stating, "We had a meeting of UHJ with members of ITC, and the members were 18 and manageable."

A member of the Universal House of Justice incorrectly attributes this to Abdu'l Baha. 'Nineteen' is plainly referenced in the previous passage.

(a) 1998 letter by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice
(b) 'Ali Nakhjavani, Shoghi Effendi: The Range and Power of his Pen, Casa Editrice Baha'i, 2006, p 251

3- The number of members is not specifically specified in Holy Text, according to Shoghi Effendi's secretary. This is also incorrect.
"The membership of the Universal House of Justice is confined to men. Fixing the number of the members, the procedures for election and the term of membership will be known later, as these are not explicitly revealed in the Holy Text." (27 May 1940)

(Women on the Universal House of Justice: by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice, 1988-05-31, date of original: 1998)

4- Another study argues that the UHJ should be made up of 19 people. The Local Spiritual Assembly was most likely formerly known as the Local House of Justice, and the House of Justice had 19 members in 1905.
"There are three meetings held in Bombay, on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings at six o clock. The Tuesday meeting is reserved for the House of Justice composed of 19 members."

(A year with the Bahais of India and Burma by Sydney Sprague second edition pa 15 The Priory Press High Street, Hampstead, London, N.W.)

Whatever the cause, the change from nineteen to nine was not a divine decree; rather, it was the kind of deception for which the Bahai faith is notorious. The Bahai Administration is now attempting to justify its nine members. This, along with several other flaws in the Bahai Faith, will cause Bahais to doubt the faith's authenticity. Without a doubt, the Bahai Faith is a man-made religion that evolves through time. Downsizing became necessary because the Bahai Administration believed that supervising and controlling 9 members would be simpler.

What is the importance of the UHJ in the Baha'i faith?

As per the teachings Bahaullah and Abdu'l Baha, the UHJ plays a very important role especially **because it enacts laws "that are not expressly recorded in the Book,"** according to the Baha'i writings, legislating on issues not covered in the original writings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha:

Those matters of major importance which constitute the foundation of the Law of God are explicitly recorded in the Text, but subsidiary laws are left to the House of Justice. The wisdom of this is that the times never remain the same, for change is a necessary quality and an essential attribute of this world, and of time and place. – Abdu'l Baha, cited in Wellsprings of Guidance, pp. 84-86.

Abdu'l Baha also promised that the Universal House of Justice is **"the source of all good and freed from all error."** Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha, p. 19.

To summarize, the UHJ is a group of people who are responsible for looking after the whole Bahai community and for putting the teachings into practice as well as developing laws from Bahaullah's teachings. They are, in a sense, acting as a Guardian who has assumed control of the faith today. Imagine a team that has a big role to play in the Bahai world, but its basis is built on lies?! Also, if a 19-member team can become infallible when they work together, can we be confident that reducing the number to 9 will have the same

outcome? Is it really possible to consider them infallible? Is it possible to trust their acts and statements at face value? Perhaps this is why, from the inception of this complete system of the existing form of UHJ, the team has strayed so far from the faith. All of their choices have been discovered to have faults and weaknesses.

The big question!

Now comes the big question that every Bahai should consider: Do we still believe in a system despite its numerous flaws? If one is unable to discover solutions to his or her problems and questions, it may be time to change one's path. It doesn't have to be atheism or a different theological perspective; it only has to be one that is based on truth and is rational and clear. You should not be ashamed of seeking to discover your own path in a way that makes sense to you; you are not required to follow the same faith as your family just because you have done so previously.

-Dr. Mark

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 6, Edition 3

Our existence should be filled with Baha'u'llah

Abdu'l Baha desired that your existence should be filled with Baha'u'llah.

Let us read the following narration by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab in the book 'Abdu'l Baha in Egypt'

In the course of His conversation with Mrs. Fraser, the Master told her that he desired that she might be filled with Baha'u'llah. She must concentrate all her ideas and thoughts around the promotion of the Word of God. Just as the cup is filled with wine, so her heart must be overflowing with the Love of the Blessed Perfection. Let her look at him. How from early morning till late in the evening he is engaged in the service of the Cause. He devotes all his time to Baha'u'llah. As she is going to India, let her one thought be Baha'u'llah. He will help her. Whenever he sends someone to serve the Cause, he prays in his behalf and God will assist him. Let her rest assured that he will be with her and she will be enabled to render great services. Let her heart be at ease and have no fear.

At another place in the same book, under the title 'An Address Delivered to the Students' it is explained how a person whose existence is filled with Baha'u'llah, for him there will be no defeat and a glorious victory will follow him.

"... In this day only those who are pure in heart are enrolled in the invincible ranks of the army of God. By this you can easily see that each one of you is a soldier and must be a courageous one, ready at any instant to give up his life for the sake of the Cause. Baha'u'llah is your Commander-in-chief, and from the invisible world he is continually reinforcing you with the powers of the Holy Spirit. Your artillery is the principles of the Cause, your cannon the love of God, your rifles the divine teachings and your defenders the angels of the Supreme Concourse. In your hearts is the love of humanity, on your lips is the word of "Ya Baha-El-Abha," in your hands is the sword of light. Before you there is no defeat, behind you there are glorious victories, and upon all sides you are surrounded by the Confirmations of God. ..."

When one learns to love Baha'u'llah and work for his Cause, he becomes a confidant and a true friend, just like in that other kind of love. One turns to Him for guidance and blessings, and in the process finds sunshine everywhere. As we all know, love is contagious.

"My love is in thee, know it, that thou mayest find Me near unto thee." – Baha'u'llah, The Hidden Words, p. 6.

When one loves another, it is expected to want to do things that will delight the loved one. In that way the emotional union is reinforced and a strong bond develops. When you love Baha'u'llah, you will be able to feel God's love for you, and in return you will show greater love to all the people God created with love.

This article has been sourced from The Caravan Magazine, Volume 3, Edition 3. Click here to download the magazine for free!

Baha’i prayer house to be converted into a brothel?

In all the divine religions, the location where prayers are made and supplications are recited, is believed to be sacred. That place is honoured, and it is mandatory to maintain its sanctity. Same is our belief with regards to the Baha’i prayers and supplications, be that place a room or any corner of a house or an apartment. The place where one communicates with the Lord is sacred. However, recently a Baha’i centre in San Francisco was sold by UHJ to a LGBT community of San Francisco. The administrative order of the Haifan Baha’is decided to sell this infrastructure to LGBT community of San Francisco for mere $100,000 extra that they were getting.

The said Baha’i centre has been the house of worship since 1976. Baha’u’llah has clearly condemned acts of homosexuality and indecency. But the administrative Baha’is pay no heed to such real teachings and preaching of Baha’u’llah. UHJ had the audacity to dishonour the words of Baha’u’llah and sell such a sacred property to a group of homosexuals who are now going to use the property for indecent acts. Baha’u’llah mentions in Kitab-i-Aqdas “we shrink, for very shame, from treating the subject of boys”. However, the Haifan Baha’is tend to publicise and promote homosexuality by selling them the infrastructure that was once used for reading the parts of Aqdas and holy teachings and prayers of Baha’u’llah. It is disturbing to see that the administration that works under the guidance of UHJ is bargaining spirituality for cheap acts of materialistic gains. Such disgraceful acts are against our holy teachings. Such sacred place would now in some time become a host for immoral activities. Worse would be the scenario if the administration continues to act in such an irreligious manner. And many such infrastructures would be sold off for cheap monetary gains. The building of administration would soon collapse, as it has been laid on the false foundations and forgery.

My prayers for those deceived and cheated by administration.

–Amin Mohajir, Malaysia (Guest Article from The Caravan, Vol. 2, Edition 7)

Questioning The Path: Has the Baha'i Faith Lost its True Purpose? Guest Article

Dear Friend,

Allah'u'Abha,

I have been reading your magazine for quite some time and have a question that I hope you can answer. I have been a Baha'i for seven and a half years. In my early years, I was introduced to the teachings of Baha'u'llah through books like the Tablets of Baha'u'llah, which initially drew me to the Faith. After my declaration, I began attending monthly feasts, and everything seemed good. I was told that the Baha'i population was around seven million worldwide, yet during the feasts, I noticed that very few people attended the meetings.

Over the years, I was introduced to the Ruhi curriculum and completed up to Book 4. Through these sessions, I learned about the importance of administration, including the Local Spiritual Assembly (LSA), the National Spiritual Assembly (NSA), and the Universal House of Justice (UHJ), which was described as the supreme body governing the affairs of Baha'is worldwide. I was told to completely surrender to this institution since its nine members are considered immaculate. This is where my internal conflict began.

I asked one of my Ruhi teachers about this, as I was initially taught that the Baha'i Faith has no clergy, unlike the church. He was unable to provide a satisfactory answer and instead warned me that questioning the absolute authority of the UHJ was equivalent to questioning the authority of the Master, Abdu'l Baha. This question has remained in my mind ever since.

I am an avid reader and have studied many Baha'i writings available in English, including Traveler's Narrative, God Passes By, Kitab-i-Iqan, Hidden Words, The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Gems of Divine Mysteries, and many more. While attending meetings and feasts, I encountered certain terms that are not found in the fundamental writings of Baha'u'llah or Abdu'l Baha. These abbreviations are frequently used in Baha'i gatherings and reports.

- IBC – International Bahá'í Council

- IEF – International Environment Forum
- IPG – Intensive Program of Growth
- ISGP – Institute for Studies in Global Prosperity
- ITC – International Teaching Centre
- JY – Junior Youth
- JYG – Junior Youth Group
- JYSEP – Junior Youth Spiritua l Empowerment Program
- Cluster and Cluster Growth

I struggled to understand where these terms originated within the Baha'i Faith. Today, discussions about Faith itself are rare; instead, gatherings revolve around these abbreviations and administrative matters. When I asked a respected member of our community about this, his response was simply, "This is how the Baha'i Faith works." Needless to say, this answer was far from satisfying.

You may be wondering why I am writing to you. From what I understand of the Free Baha'i Faith, you do not believe in any form of administration. As a true follower of Baha'u'llah, it deeply troubles me that when I ask questions, I do not receive clear answers from the elders or scholars in our community. Therefore, I decided to raise my concerns through your magazine.

Through my studies, I have found no mention of these terms in the holy writings of Baha'u'llah, the Master, or even early Baha'i scholars. I have read numerous accounts of Abdu'l Baha's travels to America and Europe, and not once did he use such terminology. Instead, he emphasized the teaching of the Faith. If I were to raise my concerns in a Baha'i gathering, I know I would be labeled a troublemaker—or worse, a Covenant Breaker. That is why I am choosing to express my concerns here.

It is clear that due to its overemphasis on administration, the Baha'i Faith has strayed from the original teachings of Baha'u'llah. Today, it seems we are merely trying to sustain a system by using bureaucratic terminology and impressing newcomers with formalities. The Faith is beginning to feel more like a social club than a spiritual path. I sincerely hope my article gets published so that more Baha'is can begin to question this so-called immaculate administration.

By filling out reports and memorizing abbreviations, are we truly spreading the words of Baha'u'llah? Or are we simply trying to gain recognition from Auxiliary Board Members (ABM) and Counselors, who, in turn, write lengthy reports to the Universal House of Justice (UHJ) about cluster growth, youth empowerment, intensive program growth, and the Institute for Studies in Global Prosperity? Are all these efforts merely a way to climb the ranks, paving the path to the International Teaching Centre (ITC) and eventually securing a seat in the UHJ?

Sincerely,
A Concerned Baha'i

Reference : The-Caravan-Vol-9-Edition-1

Reasons Behind The Exodus From The San-Guardian Organization

I was an active, deepened Haifan Baha'i for eighteen years. Over time, I lost my faith in the Administration and have since become a Free Baha'i, following Baha'u'llah and the Master alone. I had put my Haifan life behind me and didn't think much about it until recently when I had conversations with Haifan Baha'is about leaving the Faith. The Haifan Baha'is that I have known were remarkably ill-informed about other sects within the Baha'is, and what they did know (or think they knew) came either from fellow Baha'is. I'm particularly sensitive to this concerning Free Baha'is because of the obvious reasons. The recent exodus from the Haifan Baha'i Faith is caused by an excessive focus on the Universal House of Justice (UHJ), which is itself an irreligious body, thinking only in terms of accumulating wealth for its members.

grew up in a Baha'i family. I went to an entirely Baha'i primary and secondary school. The popular culture I imbibed included teaching the Faith, attending Ruhi classes, participating in National Baha'i Day festivities, and observing all Baha'i Holy days.

While speaking at a small youth conference arranged by the UHJ, it was the first time I realized that life cannot be managed by organized religion. This realization is only just coming into scope for this kind of social scientific inquiry. I believe this story is increasingly typical among serious Baha'i youths who considered the Baha'i Administration as a religion.

There is a backlash against the infallibility status of the UHJ. Many Haifans are rejecting the identity of "Baha'i" because they don't want to be associated with figures like Peter Khan, Shehriyar Razavi, Payman Mohajirs Correas, etc., given them the status of infallibility.

There is a backlash against Haifan culture due to numerous scandals, love stories involving Baha'i teachers, high divorce rates among Baha'is, and reports of extra-marital affairs among Baha'i counselors. The Baha'is say these are all welcomed by the UHJ.The Baha'i administration prefers unmarried women for pioneering purposes, contributing to an increase in immorality among the Baha'is.

Baha'i girls and boys rocking in front of their parents with suggestive pelvic thrusts have put elderly parents to shame. Once I asked my father, "Have we come to a religious function to revive ourselves spiritually or a fashion show program with scantily dressed ladies?"

People should realize that the Baha'i administration has nothing to offer to non-Baha'is. The Holy Writings have been sidelined; firesides, mass teaching, and the Ruhi curriculum have given no results leading to ultimate failure. The only way left for the Baha'i administration is to offer pop culture to save their Titanic from sinking. We will have good stories to tell our grandchildren about an attempt made by irreligious people and enemy agents against the Revealed religion called the Baha'i Faith, which could not see the light of the day and died prematurely.

-A Free Baha'i Writer

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 7, Edition 6

Rejecting the Authority of Clergy in the Baha'i Faith

"In this movement there will never be any paid ministers, no appointed clergy, no bishops, no cardinals, no popes, no ceremonies. A clergyman, assuming that he is ordained to his ministry, may think that he knows more about God than anyone else, whereas the humble man in his congregation may know more about God than he does. The sacerdotal and theological position makes a clergyman proud and haughty." – Abdu'l Baha

(Reference: Diary of Ahmad Sohrab, March 21, 1913)

Clergy are formal leaders within a religion and their roles and functions may differ as per religious traditions, but usually involve presiding over specific rituals and teaching their religion's doctrines and practices. As per the Jewish tradition, a religious leader is often a rabbi (teacher) or hazzan (cantor). In Christianity, the specific names and roles of the clergy vary by denomination and there is a wide range of formal and informal clergy positions, including deacons, elders, priests, bishops, preachers, pastors, ministers and the Pope. In Islam, a religious leader is often known formally or informally as an imam, qadi, mufti, mullah, or ayatollah. Buddhist clergy are often collectively referred to as the Sangha, and consist of various orders of male and female monks.

When I became a Baha'i, I was told that one major difference between the Baha'i and other world religions is that Baha'is have no clergy. It came to me as a surprise because clergies have some defined roles and responsibilities which they perform to keep the Baha'i connected with his religion. One of their key responsibilities is to teach the doctrines of the religion by way of preaching, conducting study classes, and organizing programs that will help spread their teachings to others. Now, if there are no clergy in the Baha'i religion then the question one might ask would be that who performs the duties and responsibilities on their behalf? The Baha'is would answer that it is an administrative body called Spiritual Assemblies who perform these duties, and on top of them is Universal House of Justice these nine members of UHJ are infallible collectively they have absolute authority on Baha'i faith, there decision cannot and should not be challenged by either individual or by community. To my understanding it is clergy in form of administration, but again I came across a saying of Abdu'l Baha about no officer and no clergy in Baha'i faith, when I questioned this and asked is there any writing or saying of Baba'u'llah or Abdu'l Baha about NSA LSA at local and national

level I was told that by such questions and thought you will become covenant breaker

So, instead of calling them clergy, the Baha'is have called them Spiritual Assemblies?! These Assemblies are a group of people who are in charge of the Baha'i faith, who govern the affairs of the community. In addition to existing at the local level, there are national Spiritual Assemblies which look after the affairs at country level. On top of that, we have the Universal House of Justice, a nine-member supreme ruling body of the Baha'i Faith. They are the one who head the religion and are the final authority over the Spiritual Assemblies. By reading that, aren't you already thinking how this structure is any different to how the clergy system works in Christianity or say Jews or Moslems? Exactly! It certainly has no difference.

How is a fatwa against a Moslem issued by a Mufti any different from a UHJ excommunicating a Baha'i? If the excommunicated Moslem is not allowed to question the Mufti, where in the world does an excommunicated Baha'i stand a chance to question the UHJ?

I have been a Baha'i since past 22 years and have been actively involved in the community but have got several excommunication warnings from the NSA for all the silly reasons in the world. Once I took my wife, who is not a Baha'i, to a Ridvan celebration and there was election of Local Spiritual Assembly and the next day I got a call from an NSA member saying since Ridvan is an Administrative gathering, non-Baha'is are not allowed. When I tried explaining her the fact that I'm trying to influence my wife to become a Baha'i and since it was a big celebration, I wanted my wife to be a part of it, I was given a final warning of excommunication and was asked to accept my fault and apologies for the same. That's not it, the LSA members started to look down at me and I was not welcomed by anyone in the community. I still do not consider this a mistake on my part and I'm fine with their behaviour.

My only concern is, again, how is the ill-behaviour of the NSA or the UHJ any different from the clergymen of the Christian or Moslems or the Jews? We Baha'is are asked to become open minded, do investigation of truth but when you actually become one and start with your reasonings, you're warned of being excommunicated and kicked out of the community. Irony isn't lost on me, yet.

I am still puzzled, if Baha'is say that there are no clergy in the Baha'i faith and this statement is supported by the saying of Abdu'l Baha, then who has designed this administrative system and from where have they got this absolute authority over the Baha'is? On one side they reject clergymen, but on the flip side they ask us to have absolute submission and obedience to the UHJ, isn't this double standard?

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Response to the letters of UHJ – Guest Article

This article is in reference to the letters sent by UHJ – An unauthorised and self-proclaimed administrative body. As we have time and again put light on the fact that the Baha'i administration is the biggest enemy of the Baha'i cause and is the root cause of obedient servants of Baha'u'llah leaving the faith.

We have reviewed the letters of UHJ sent during 2022 and would like to point out their clear lies and how they are playing around with the emotions of the sincere followers.

Below are some of the points:

- The UHJ in their letters hype about the Ruhi institute and their teachings. Can UHJ give an exact number as to how many converts they have found in this process?
- Who has approved this institute and the study materials being thought to the children or youngsters. Are they the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha or are they the forged and misinterpreted teachings?
- UHJ claims to have made a global plan to attract more seekers (basically found new converts), is this a plan only on paper or will actually be implemented. Because there is no significant increase in the number of Baha'is globally.
- I won't shy away from saying that the Ruhi institute is just another flop show by the administration.
- When UHJ writes a letter to the 'Continental Board of Counsellors' (3rd Jan 22), they show regret for cancelling the meeting that was supposed to happen in Haifa due to geopolitical reasons. However, when they write letter to the Baha'is very next day (4th Jan 22) they mention that 'the continental counsellors are present in Holy Land for the meeting and it is

the 6th and final day of the conference.'

- The UHJ has a track record of not responding to queries raised by us (Free Baha'is) on the illegitimacy of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha, the atrocities of Shoghi Effendi and the basis of their suffocating administrative control.
- The UHJ in reality is only enjoying on the funds, especially Huququllah that they get which is not even their legitimate right. Similar to Shoghi, they are stealing from the innocent Baha'is.
- The UHJ boasts about the fact that they have erected the last of the Continent House of Worship i.e. the House of Worship in Chile. Can they say what they have done for the poor Baha'is living in Chile?
- UHJ states that further plans are being made to establish the house of worship at national and local levels. Are they really planning to do so or it is just another attempt to collect the money from Baha'is for their personal enjoyment in Haifa?
- The UHJ should give an account of the amount they have collected from the Baha'is and the amount actually spent towards the Cause. The UHJ is accountable for it and should definitely give an account for the same.
- In the Ridwan 2022 letter to the Baha'i world, the UHJ very clearly lied by saying 'As we know well and are reassured that… the followers of Baha'u'llah are committed to offering relief and support to those around them, no matter how straitened their own circumstances.' What relief has the administration offered to others and what support has been provided? Leave alone the general people, the Baha'is themselves have not been provided any relief or support by the UHJ.
- In the letter to the Baha'i world dt. 24th May 2022, the UHJ very proudly mentioned that 700 Baha'is from 169 countries have come forward to pioneer. Who has this list of 700 pioneers? They are from which location? Who is funding them? As usual, these are just mere numbers, in reality the Baha'is are pissed off with the way they are being treated and pressurised by the administration.
- There are many Baha'is who are even scared today to speak out as they are scared that they will be removed from the faith by being pronounced as covenant breakers.

The Baha'i administration is very cleverly playing with the emotions of the innocent Baha'is by showing them a very colourful portrait which has no reality. When time comes there is no one to stand beside the Baha'is who are persecuted or mistreated.

The UHJ is just using persecution as a tool to raise hue and cry in the United Nations but is not doing anything to actually save the Baha'is, or give them refuge.

A reality check needs to be done by each and every Baha'i and they should do a thorough research of history and faith in order to understand the plotting that has happened after the death of the Master.

Regards,

Jonas S.

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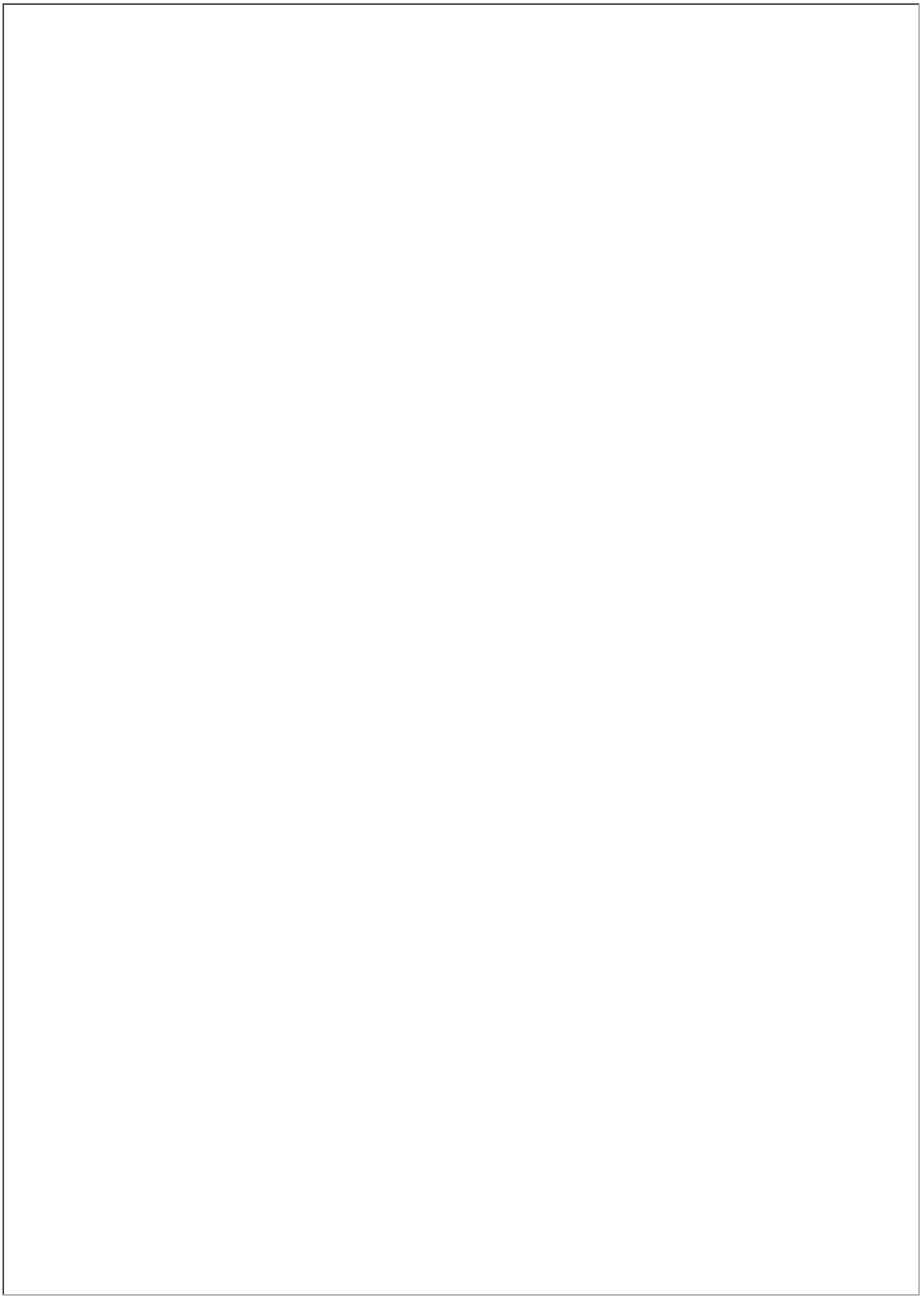
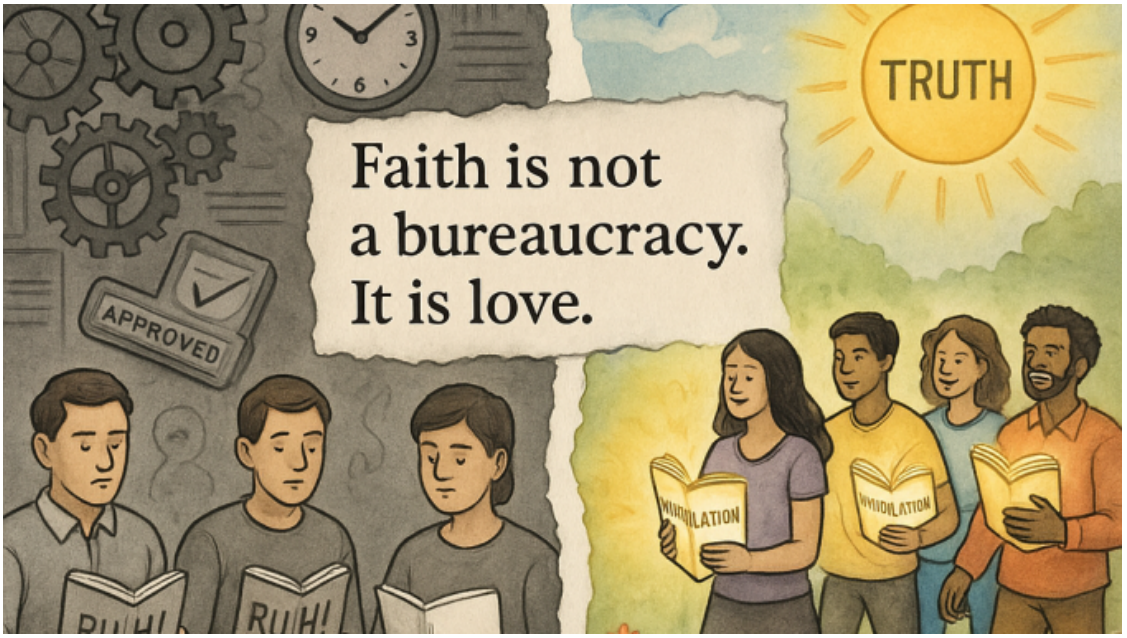
Ridvan greetings from Australian Prime Minister



(Source: The Caravan, Volume 3, Ridvan Special Edition)

Ruhi over Revelation? A Sociological Expose of Administrative Hijacking



The Haifan Baha'i Administration has made great strides in assuring the Haifan world that the Ruhi Curriculum is a spiritual and educational unifier. However, beneath the specifically simplified booklets and administered study circles is something more nefarious; it aims to homogenize a dynamic and universal religion into a mechanical administrative program. For Free Baha'is who claim their allegiance to the pristine teachings of Baha'u'llah and the central premise of independent investigation of truth, Ruhi represents everything we stand against. Sociologist Farida Fozdar, (the daughter of Minoo Fozdar, the 3rd brother of John & Jamshid Fozdar), who has defined Baha'i heritage, has written a powerful assessment of the Ruhi process, not as heresy, but from a sociological and humanistic perspective. Below are the key takeaways from her article and the reasons all Baha'is need to deep reflect on them. Yes, I mean it – ALL Baha'is.

1. Ruhi Has become "the" Religion

A tradition which was originally reflective of scripture, personal transformation and inner process has now become a rigidly generalized course. Fozdar notes that 'essentially Ruhi has become the religion' with other members feeling they must follow the same narrowly avoided study books to count as Baha'is – "*active*" Baha'is.

This is deeply problematic. It not only lowers spiritual depth and nuances of personal engagement, but it also brings hierarchy into this once egalitarian society, with status associated with the completion of their Ruhi books. We as Free Baha'is, ask – Is Baha'u'llah's message so superficial that it can only be understood through a nine-book crash course?

2. It takes down the principle of "Independent Investigation of Truth"

Ruhi imposes a unified version of Baha'i teachings, undermining independent investigation. The books minimize the sacred texts to phrases, brief-excerpts, or fill-in-the-blank questions. These phrases are often stripped of their context.

Farida Fozdar observes that this "contradicts the Baha'i emphasis on diversity" and establishes an "elite"

class of Ruhi-affiliated Baha'is at the expense of others who may be genuinely spiritual while choosing to engage with the original Writings without filtering through own version of the Writings.

3. It is a cultural misfit

The reality is, as Fozdar observes, that the Ruhi curriculum is based on the unwritten educational expectations of rural Colombia, namely – there is an expectation of high uncertainty avoidance, low individualism and group conformity. And Ruhi was then transported around the globe, including the United States, which has an opposite set of cultural values: independent, diversity, and skepticism of hierarchy.

Thus, many Western Baha'is – especially young people – feel a sense of alienation and disengagement. It is no wonder the Faith fails to attract new generations (you can refer the 2025 Ridvan Report released by the NSA of the Baha'is of the United States). Which clearly means – it's NOT the message from Baha'u'llah they are rejecting; it is THE administrative machinery.

4. From Spirit to System: The 'McDonaldization' of Faith

Ruhi exemplifies what sociologist George Ritzer uses the term "McDonaldization" to describe, a devotion to efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. According to Fozdar, Ruhi uses the language of corporate management as well, measuring growth in books completed, service hours, and the number of study circles, and is treating spiritual growth as if it were a business KPI that they were tracking.

This fixation on quantification is seen in Ridvan Reports, where progress is quantified via the number of "clusters" that have achieved "stage three" Besides, how many hearts have been touched? How many souls have awakened? That's not a question they would ever think to ask.

5. Suppressing Dissent and Silencing Thought

Criticism of the Ruhi Curriculum is not welcomed within the fold of Haifa, as Fozdar notes. He finds that there is no real critical discussion of Ruhi in Baha'i publications. Those who have expressed concern about these materials have been quietly labeled "covenant breakers" or "not deepened enough" to understand Ruhi.

There is irony, and danger, in that for a religion that teaches unity in diversity. The Free Baha'i spirit, however, promotes sincere questioning of the Writings, and believes in the values of reasoning and discovery, we are not here simply to obey, but to discover truth with an open heart.

6. Exclusion by Means of Standardization

In establishing a system of spiritual paths, the Ruhi sequence excludes others. Those who do not complete the avenue of study are not allowed to serve in several ways, some significant. In doing this, there is a caste system based on the completion of curriculum, not spiritual maturity.

Whatever happened to the inclusivity that Baha'u'llah aspired to? When you are locked out of service due to lack of a certificate the message is clear: you are not enough unless you conform

7. Globalization as Control, Not Expansion

Ruhi was initially designed to educate the Iranian Baha'i diaspora after the 1979 revolution, many of whom were nominal Baha'is lacking deep knowledge. While that purpose was understandable, its global rollout has turned the Faith into a homogenized, one-size-fits-all structure, stifling local culture and diversity of thought.

As Fozdar points out, this is not indigenization but enforced conformity. The global Baha'i Faith, instead of

flourishing organically, is being pruned to fit administrative designs.

8. Ruhi is NOT growing

The ultimate irony is that despite the control and the systemization, Ruhi has not helped foster significant growth. Fozdar states “a difficult, perhaps impossible, task, has been to access figures for the number of Baha’is worldwide,” and even the official statistics are mum on how many former Baha’is there are, or how many remain inactive.

Is Ruhi really promoting the growth of Faith? Or does it just give the illusion of growth while the very soul of the community slips quietly away?

Final Thoughts: The Free Baha’i Path We are Free Baha’is because we are convinced the Baha’u’llah’s message is not something to be wrapped up in manuals and seminars. Faith is not a bureaucracy. It is love. It is truth. It is the courage to ask and the humility to grow.

We, the Free Baha’is, are taking a different path. The path of the heart, the path of the writings, the path of the eternal torch of individual search. Let us walk together, not in unison, but in unity.

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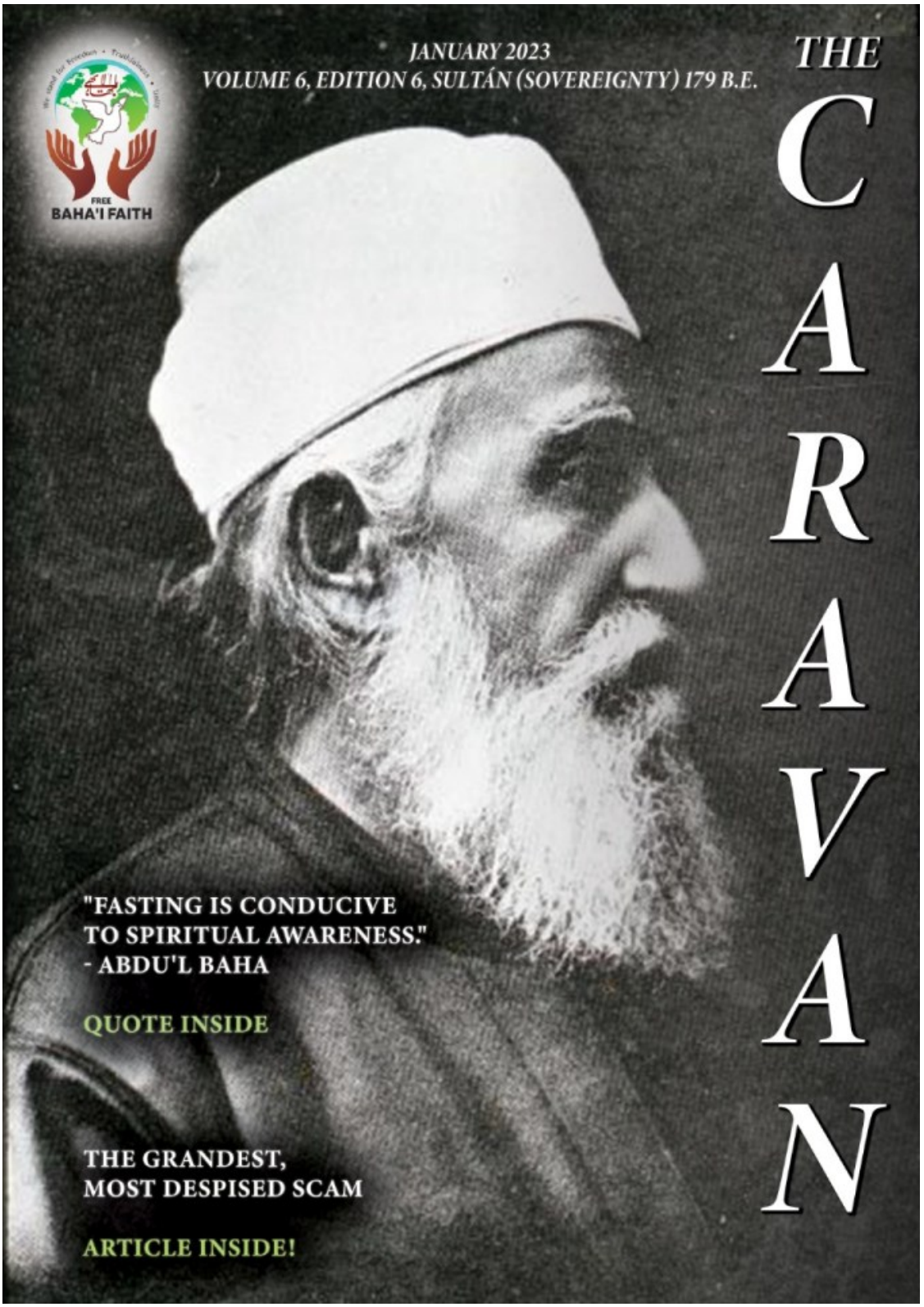

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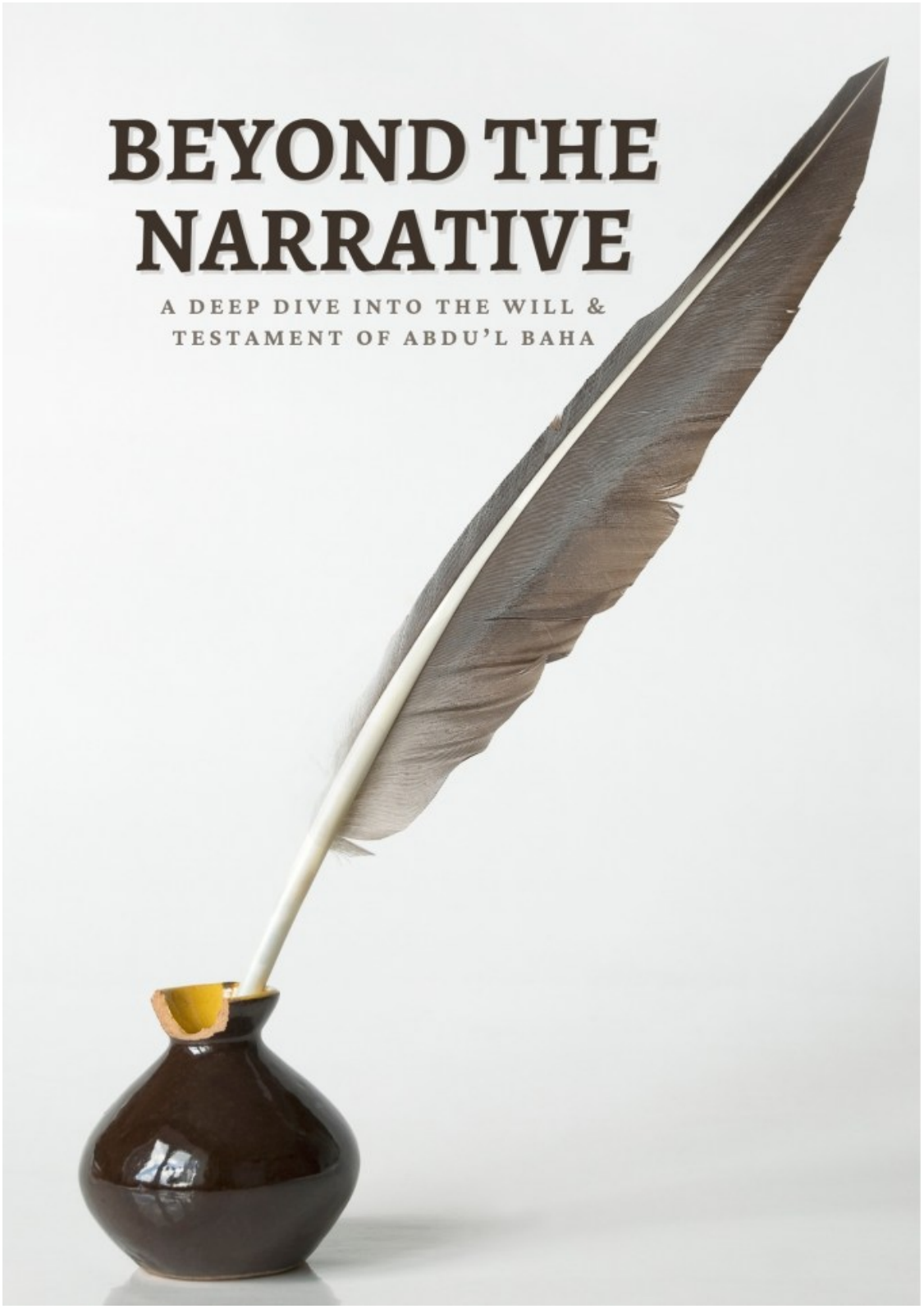

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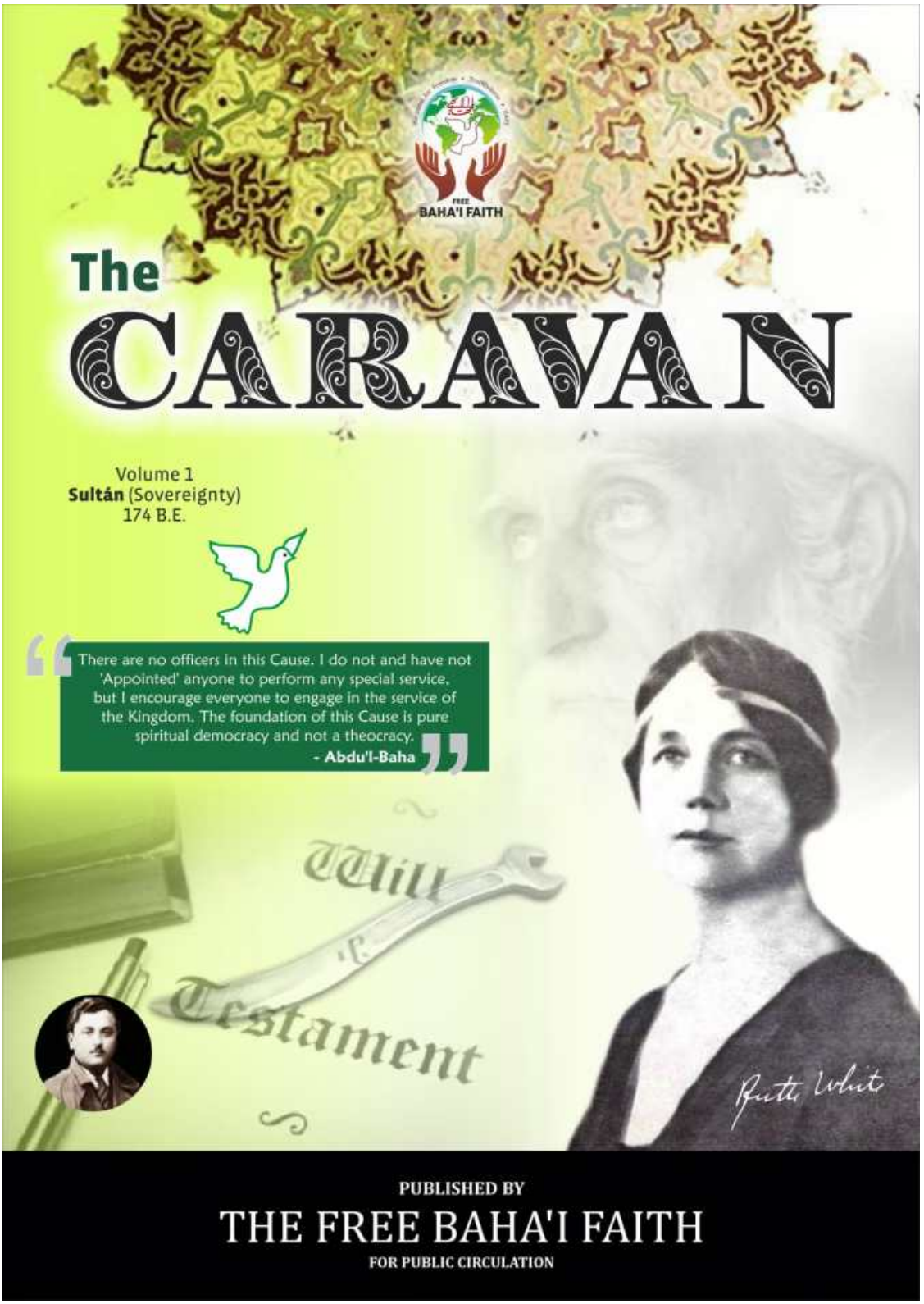
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There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not 'Appointed' anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy.
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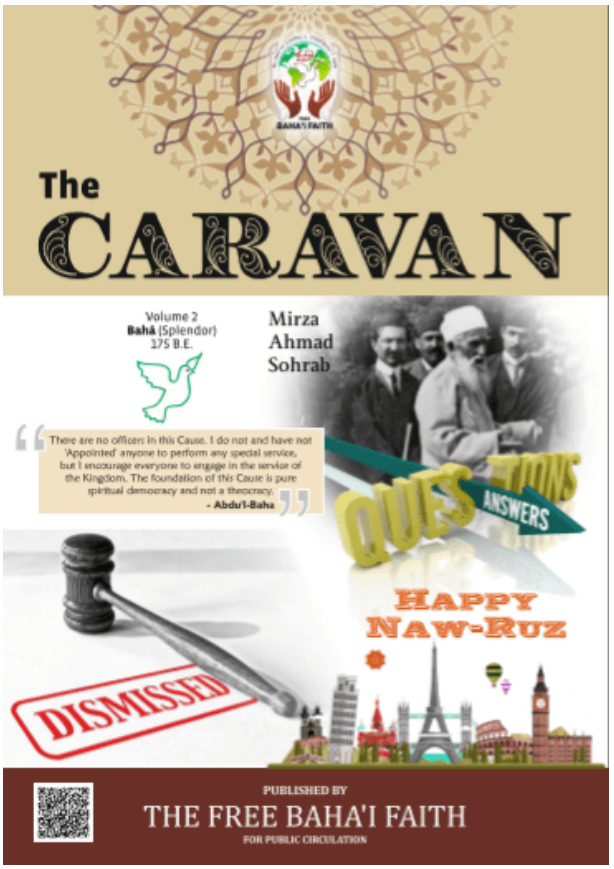
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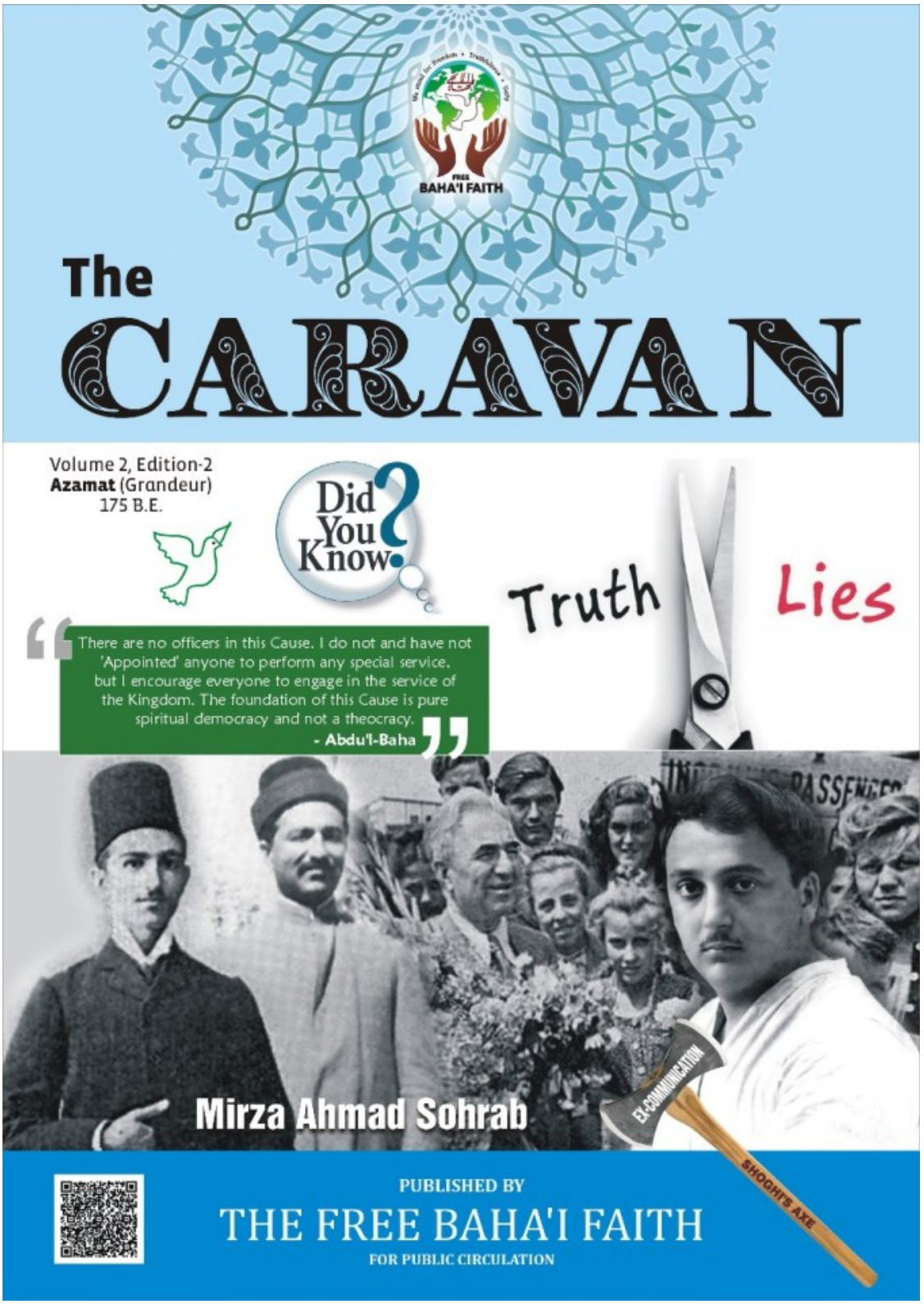
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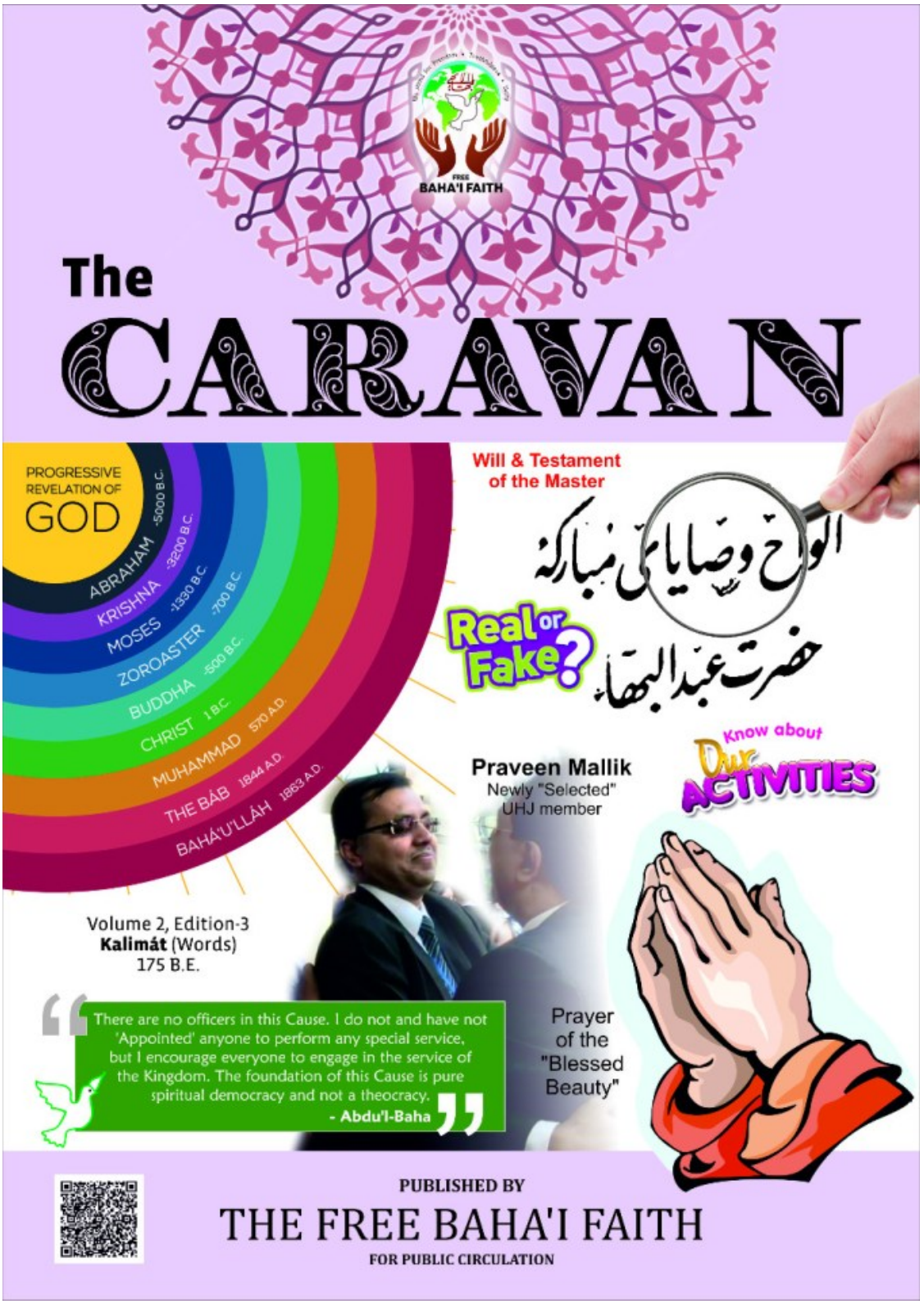
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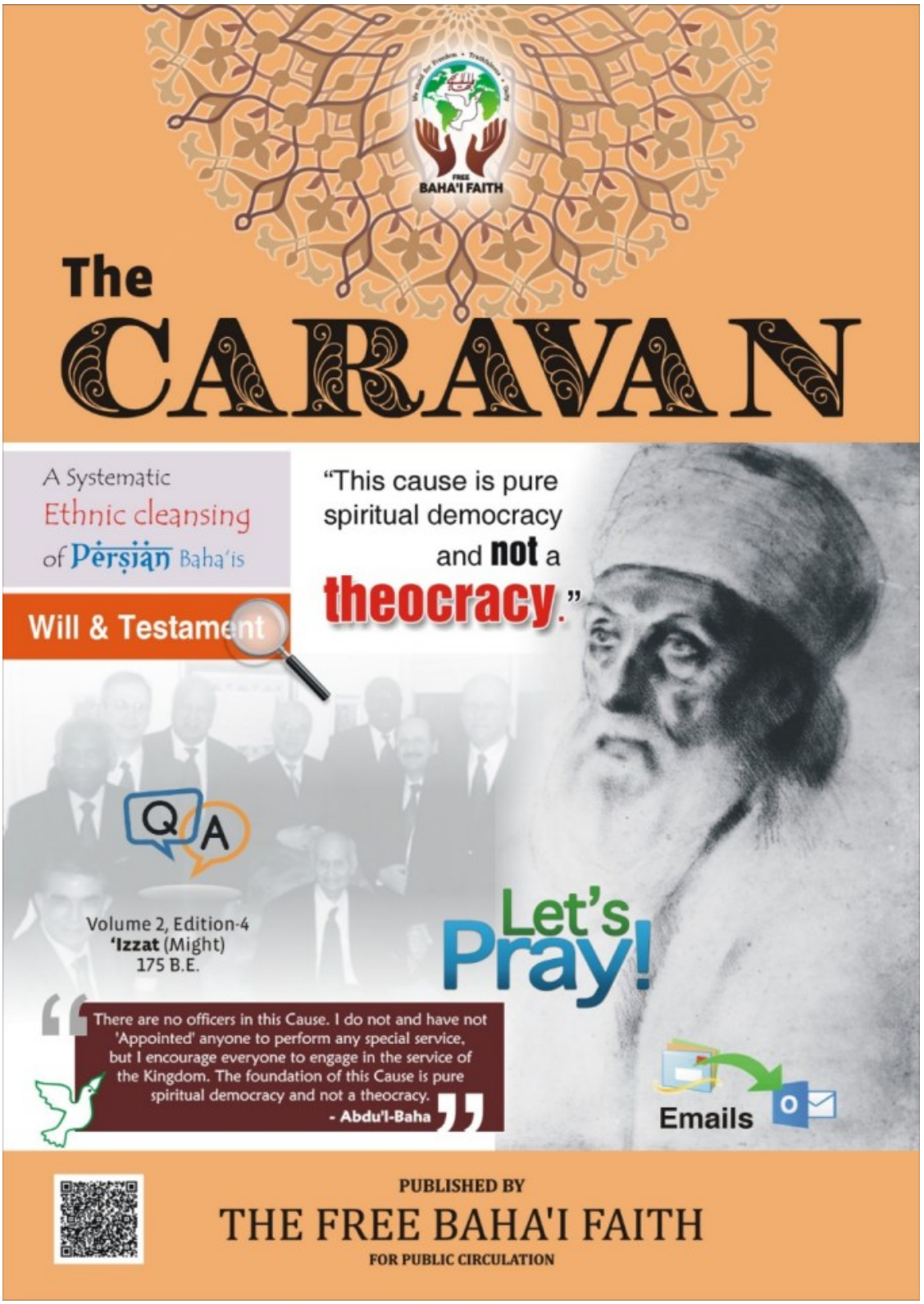
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- Abdu'l-Baha
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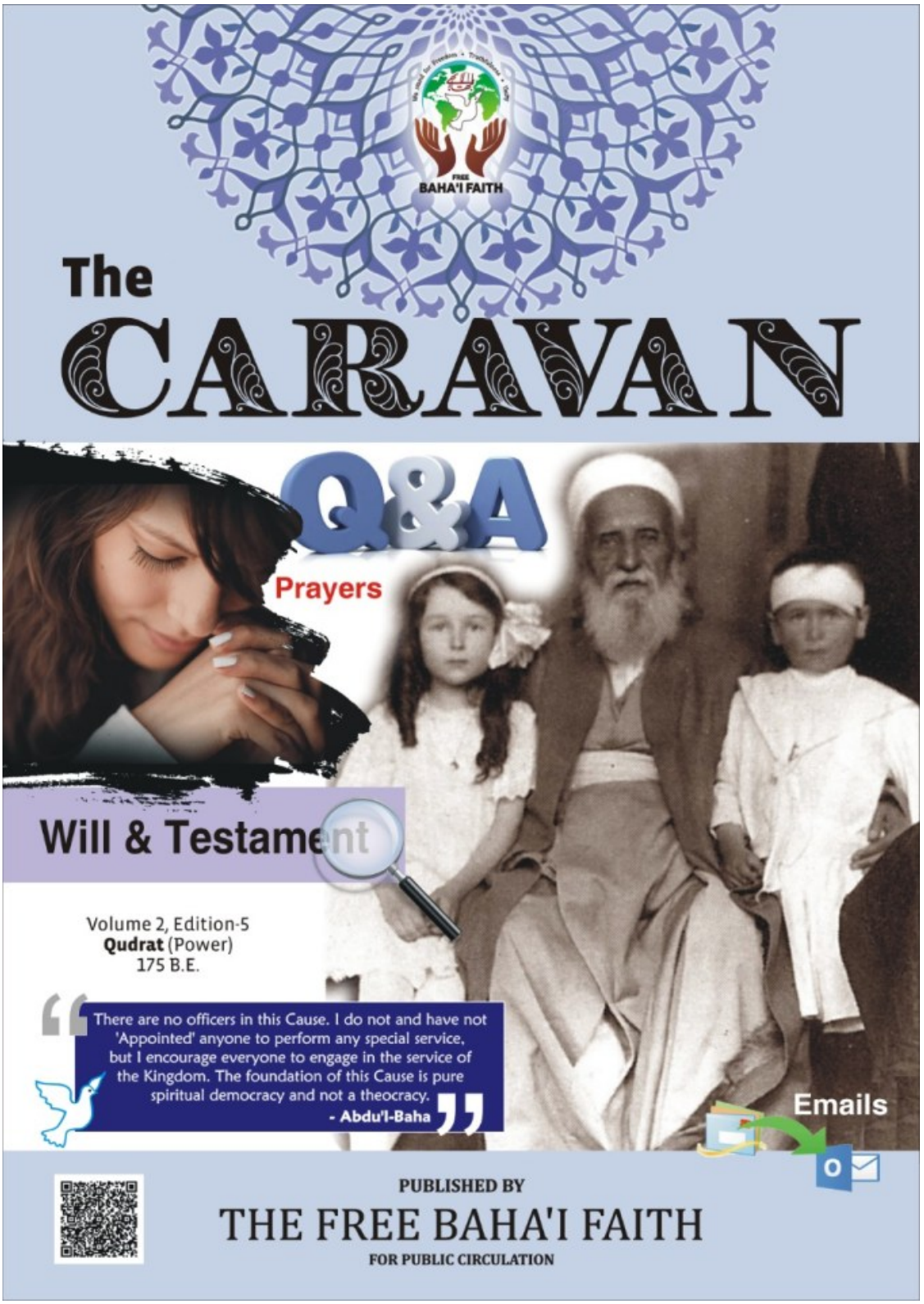
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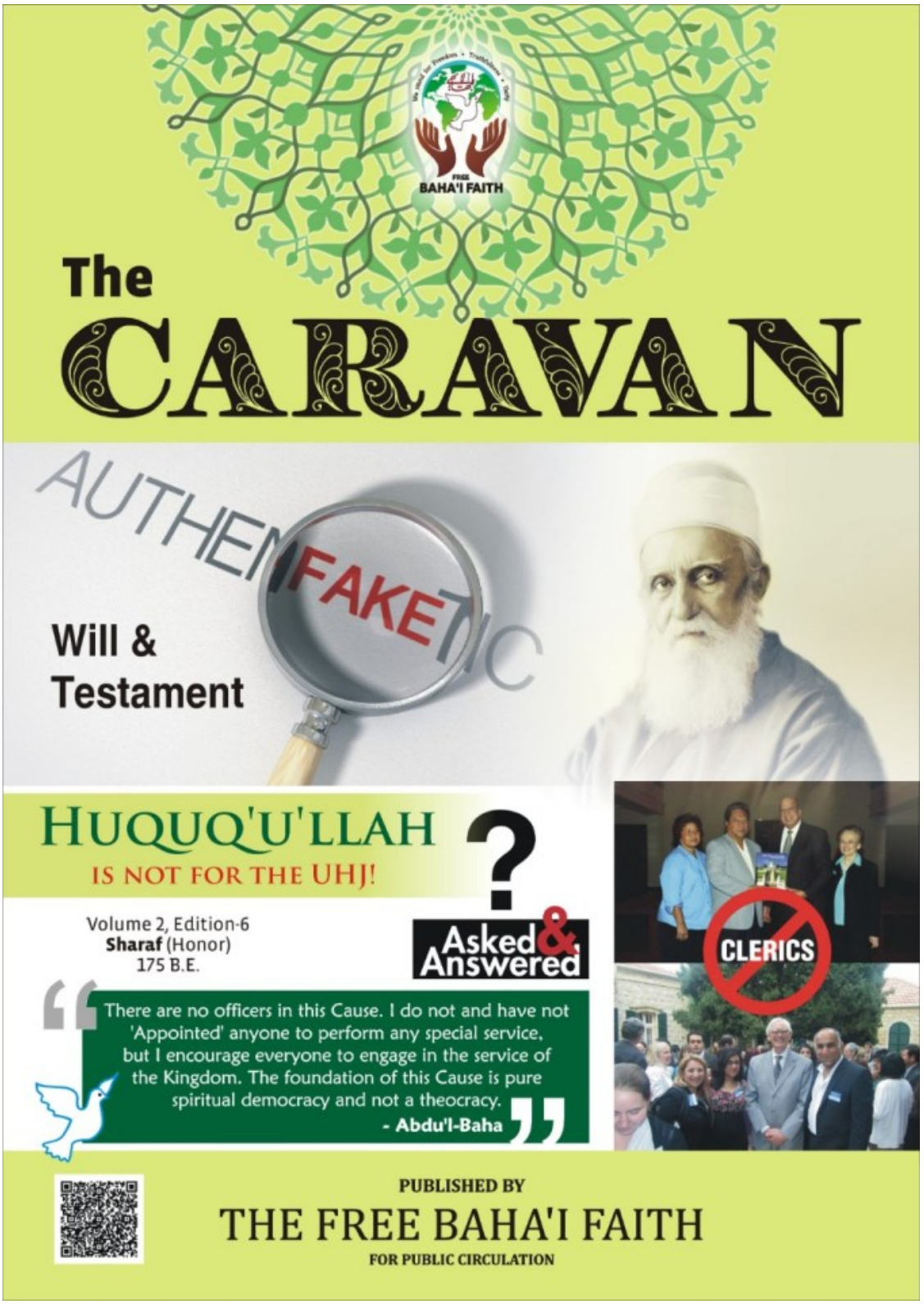
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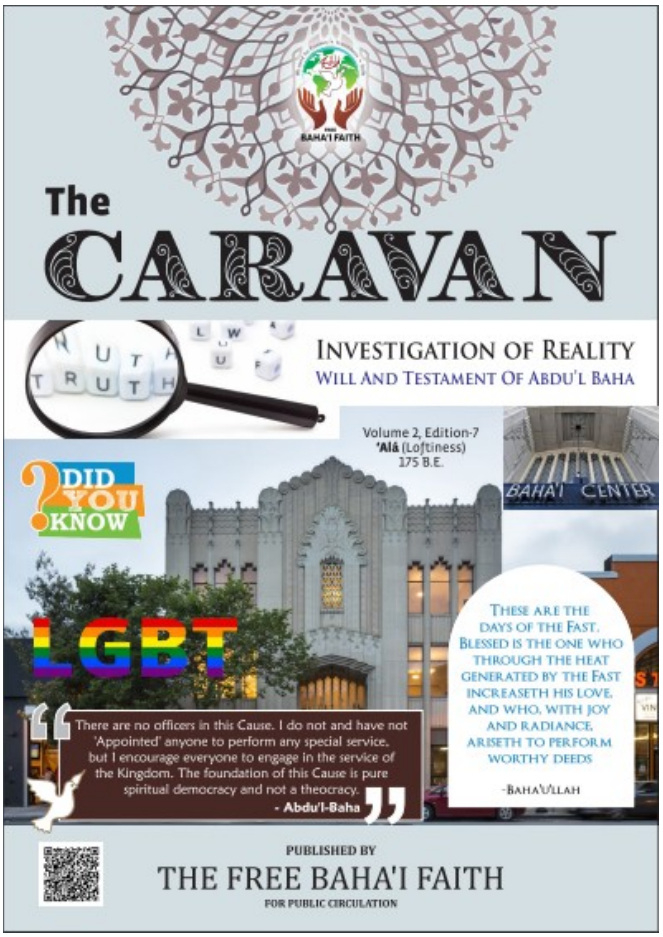
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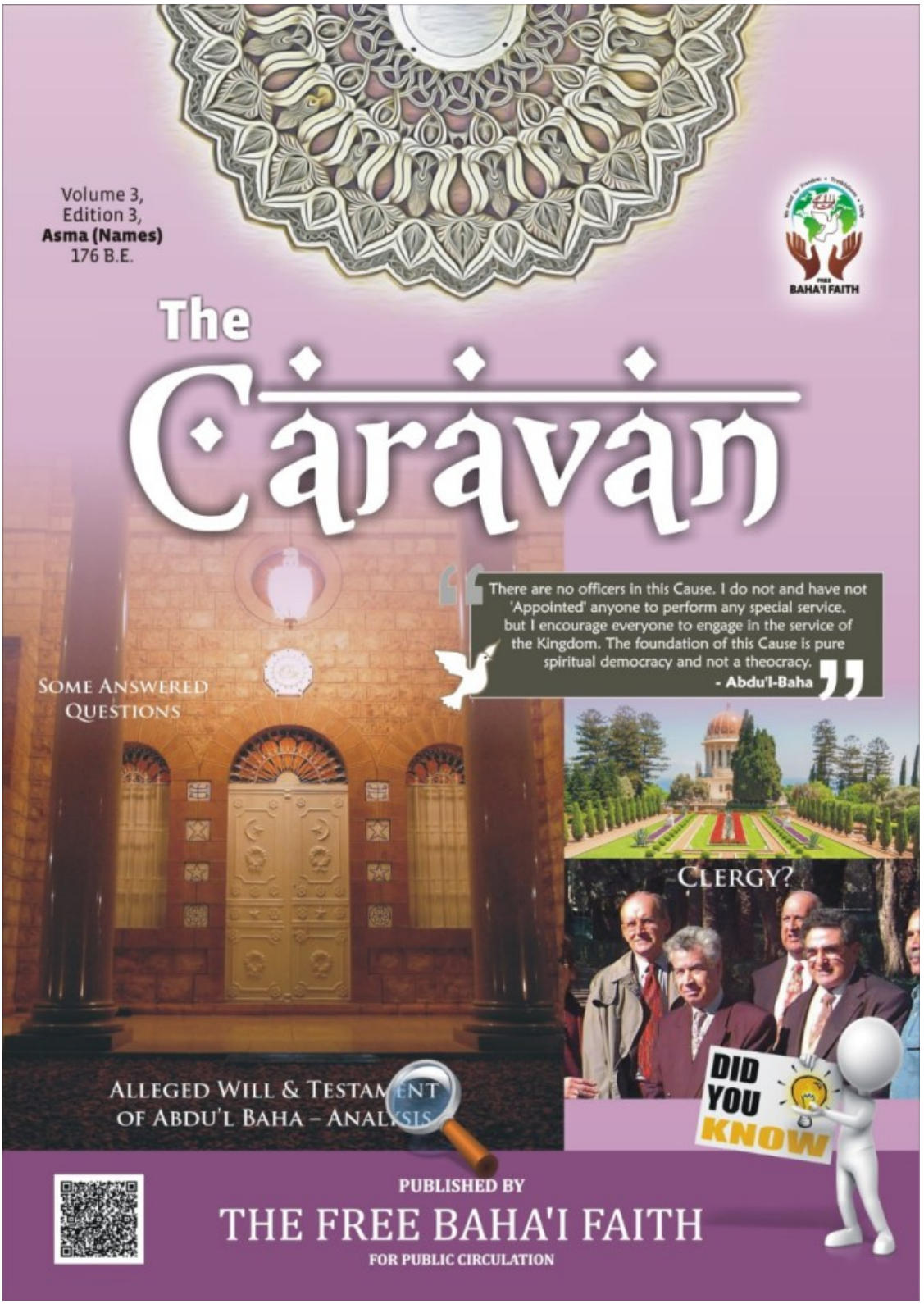
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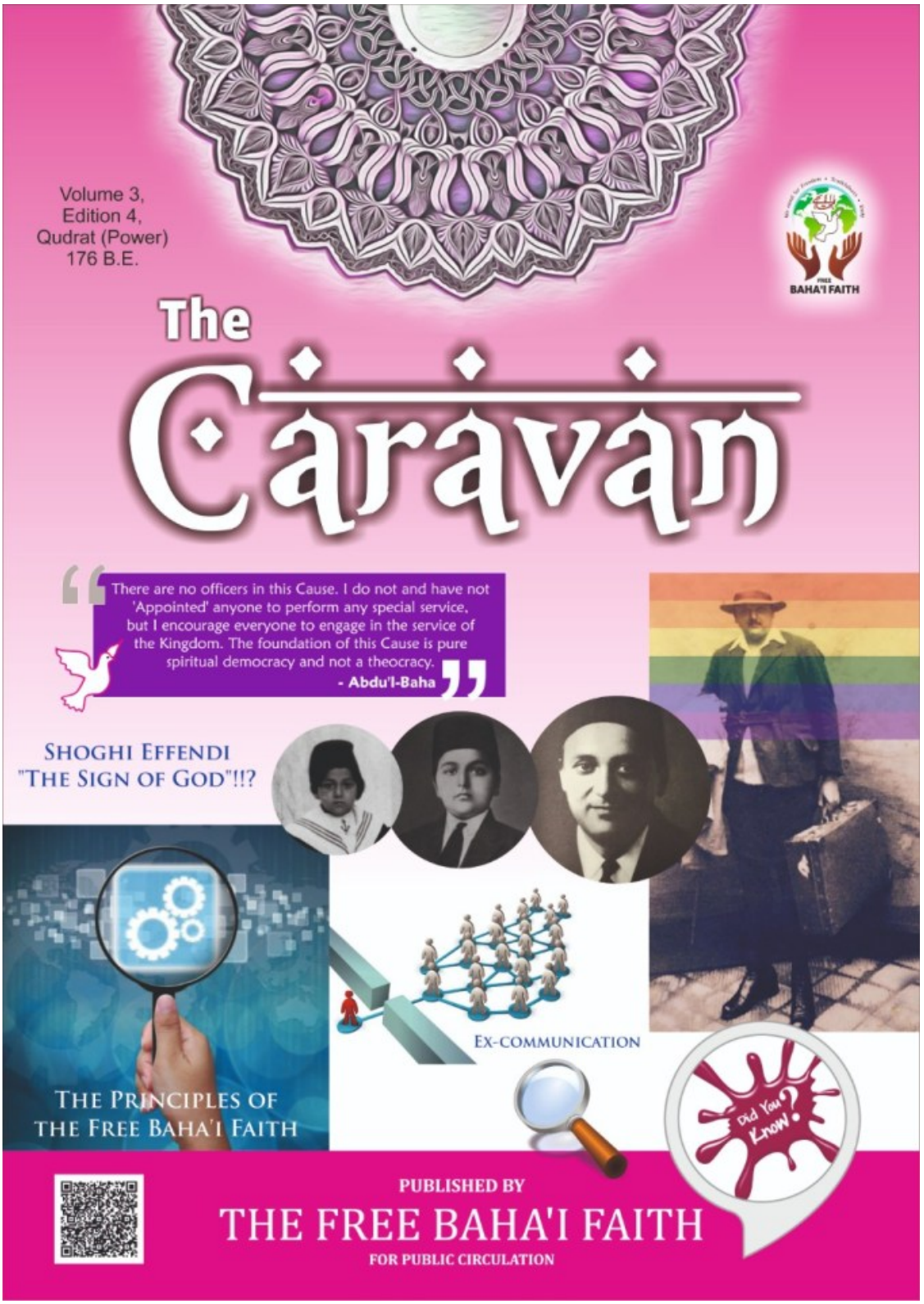
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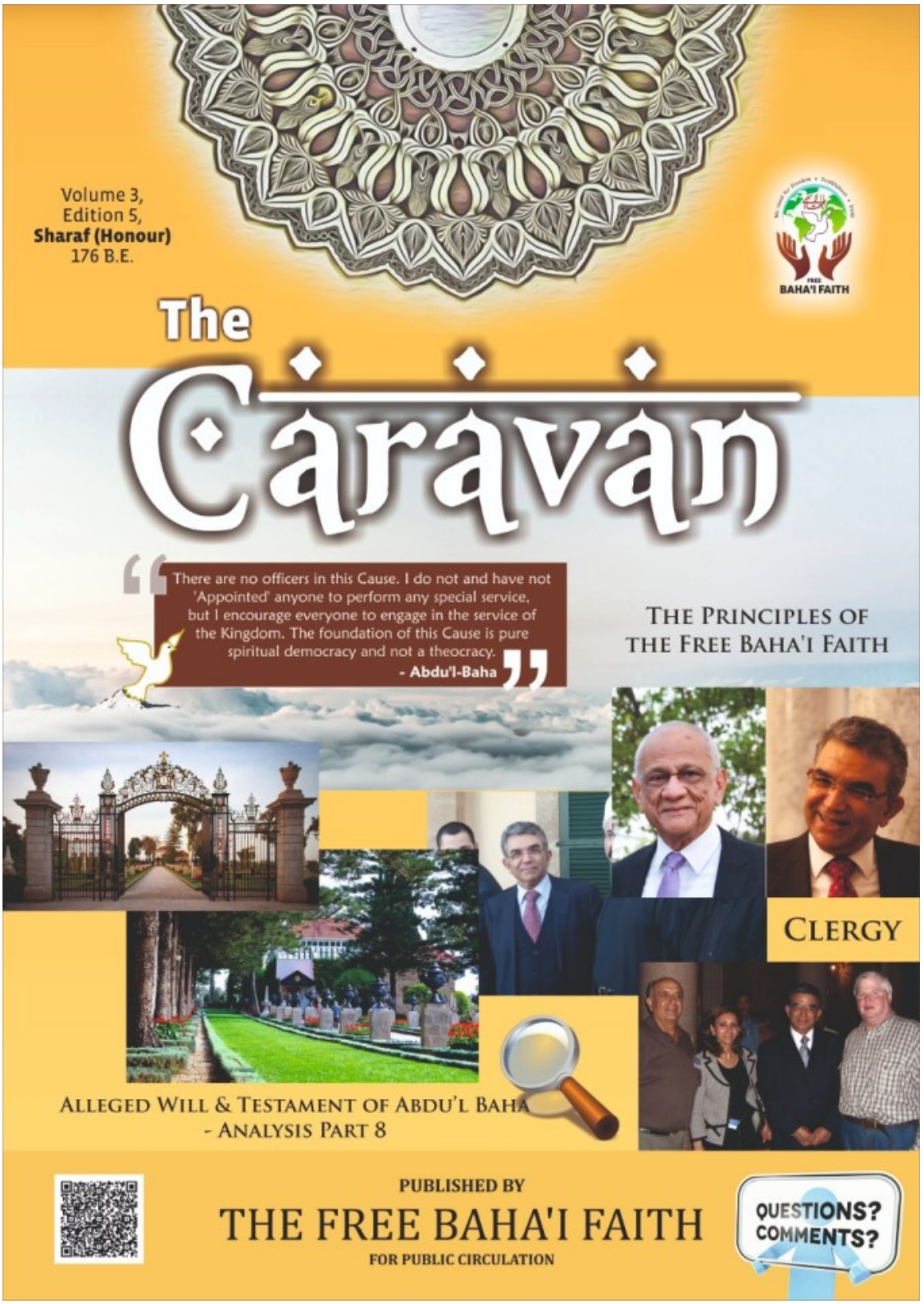
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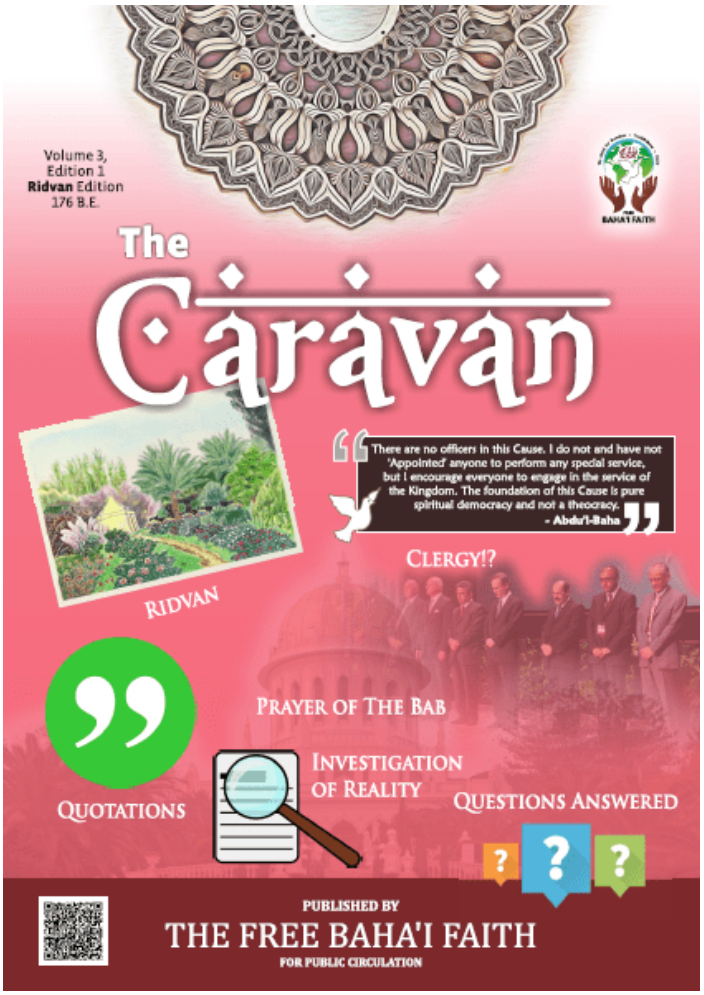
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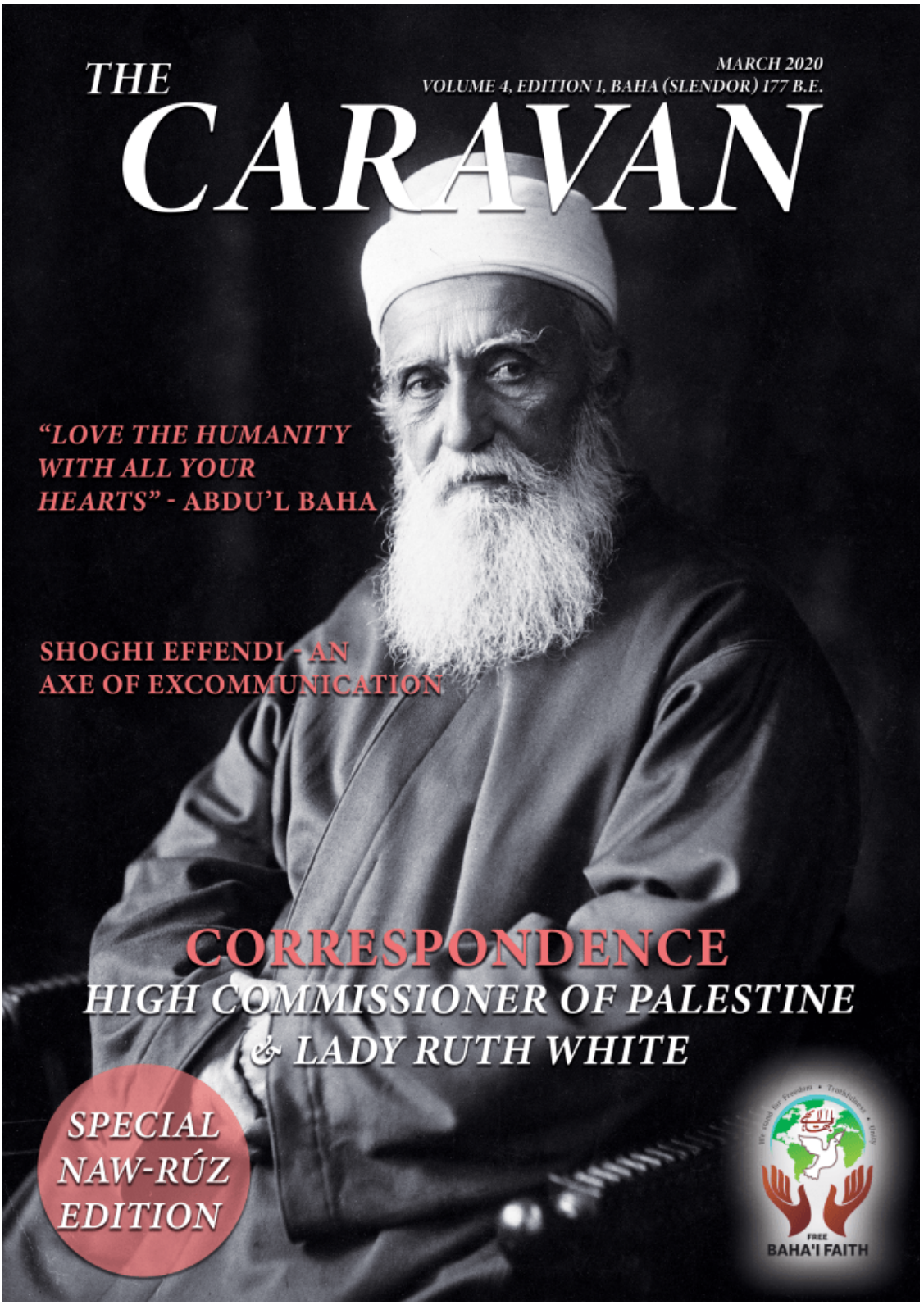
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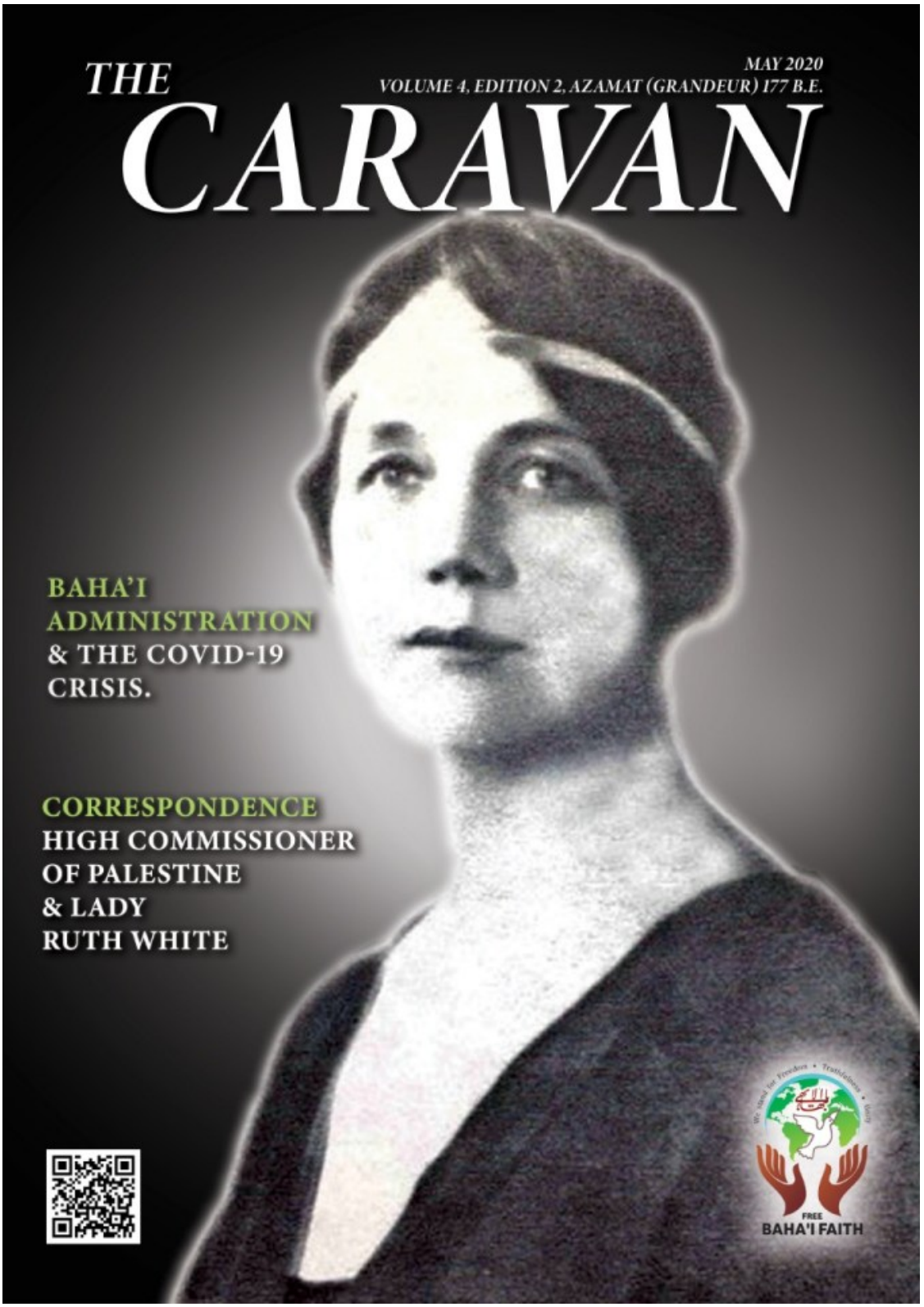

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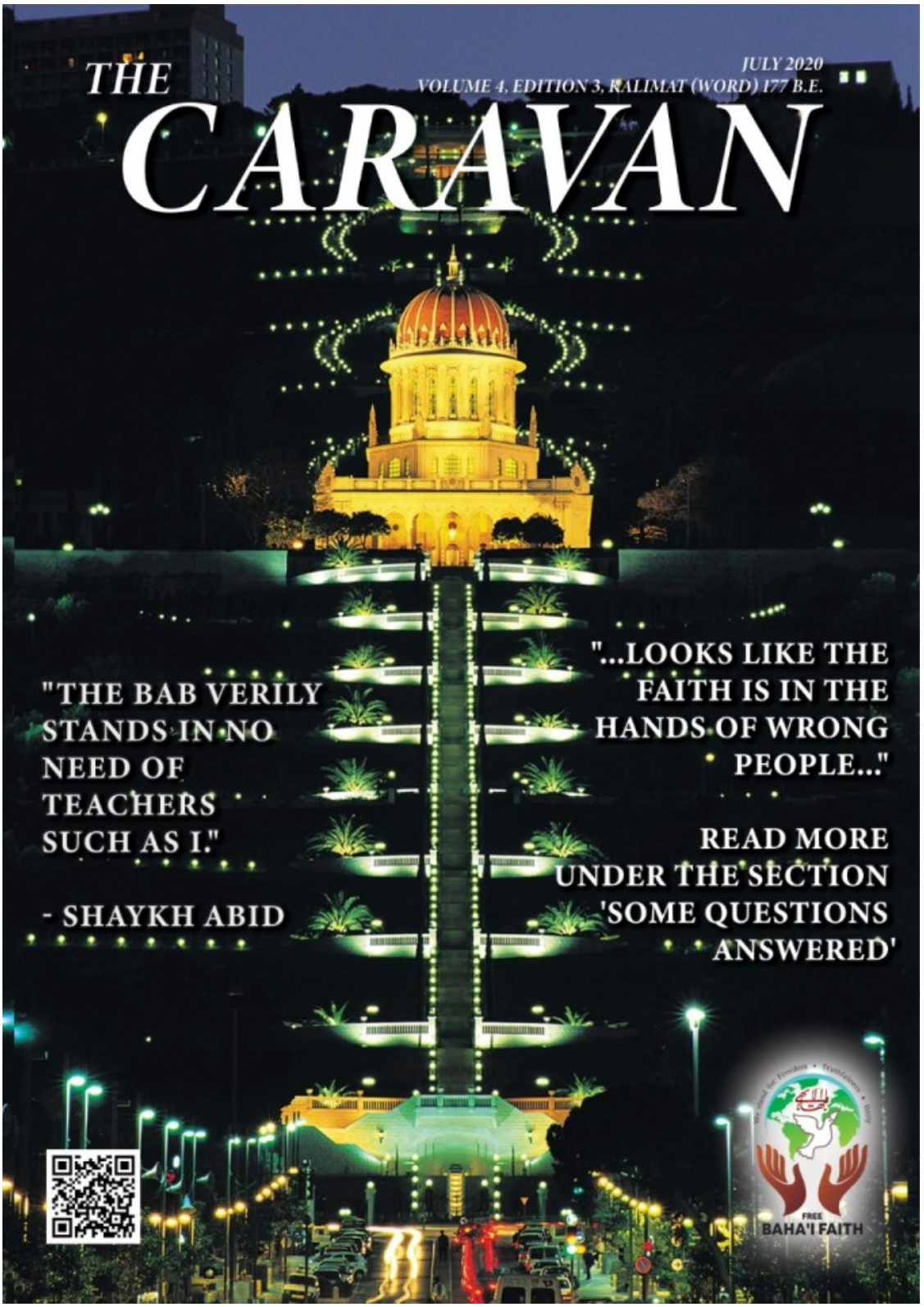
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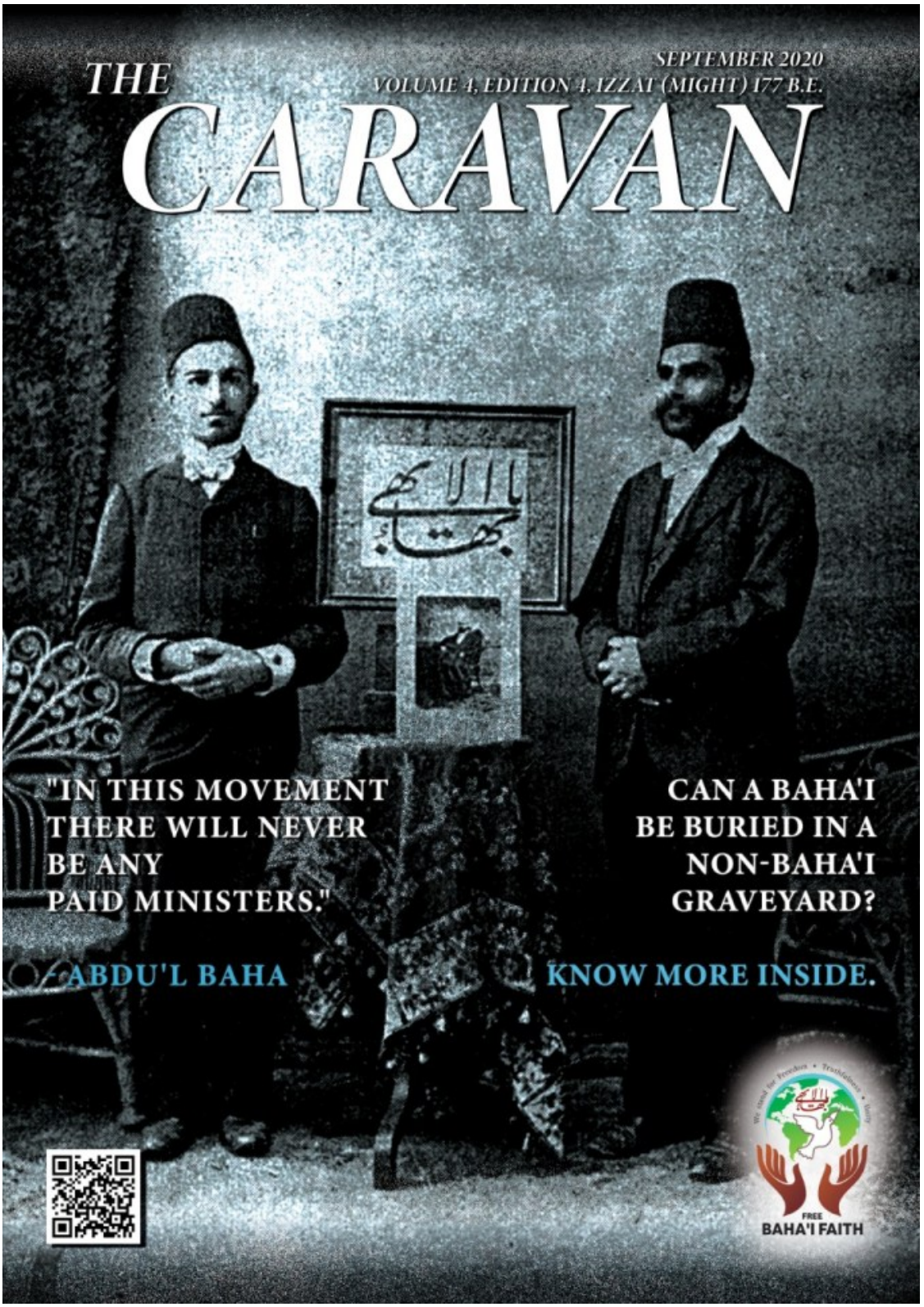
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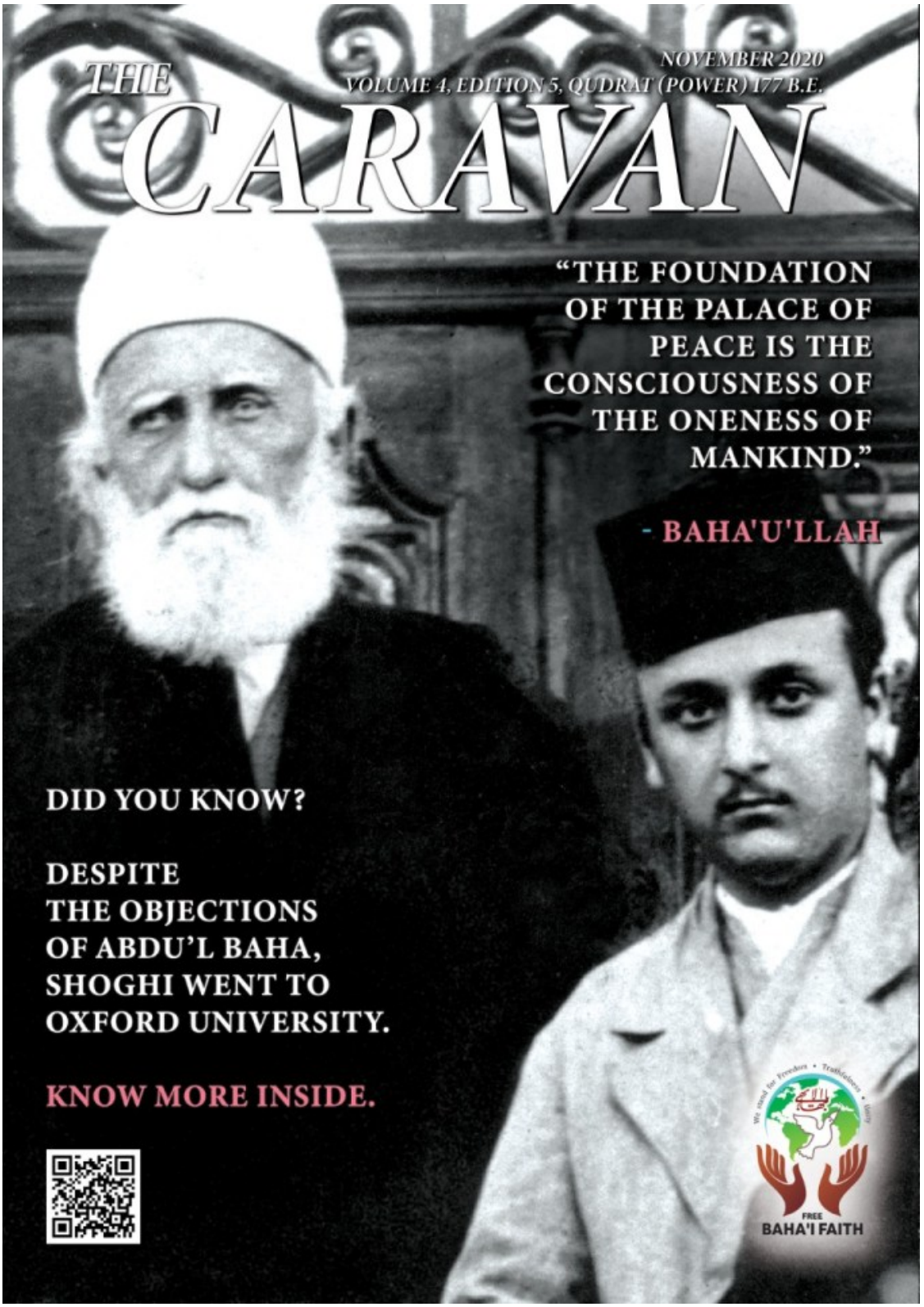
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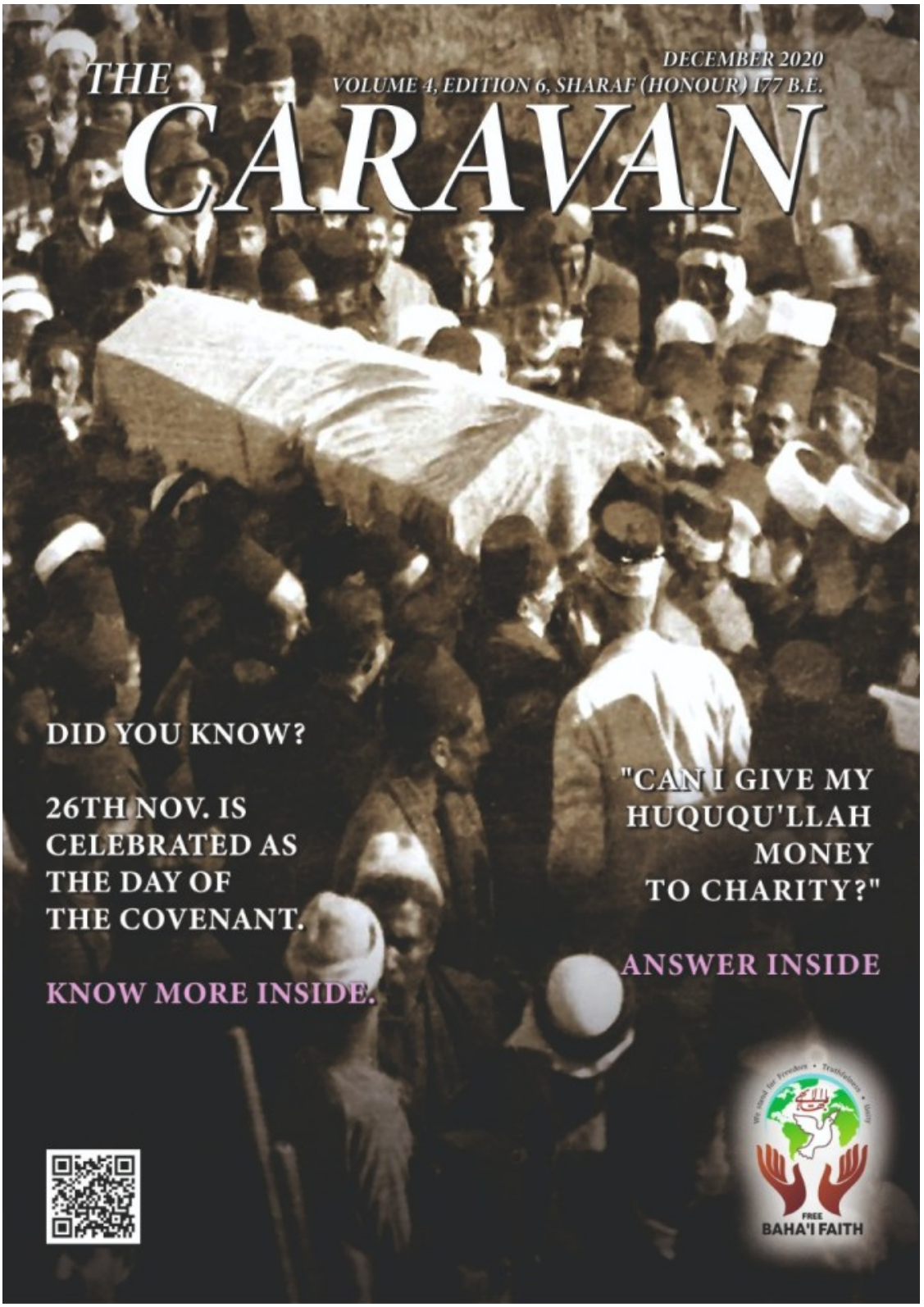
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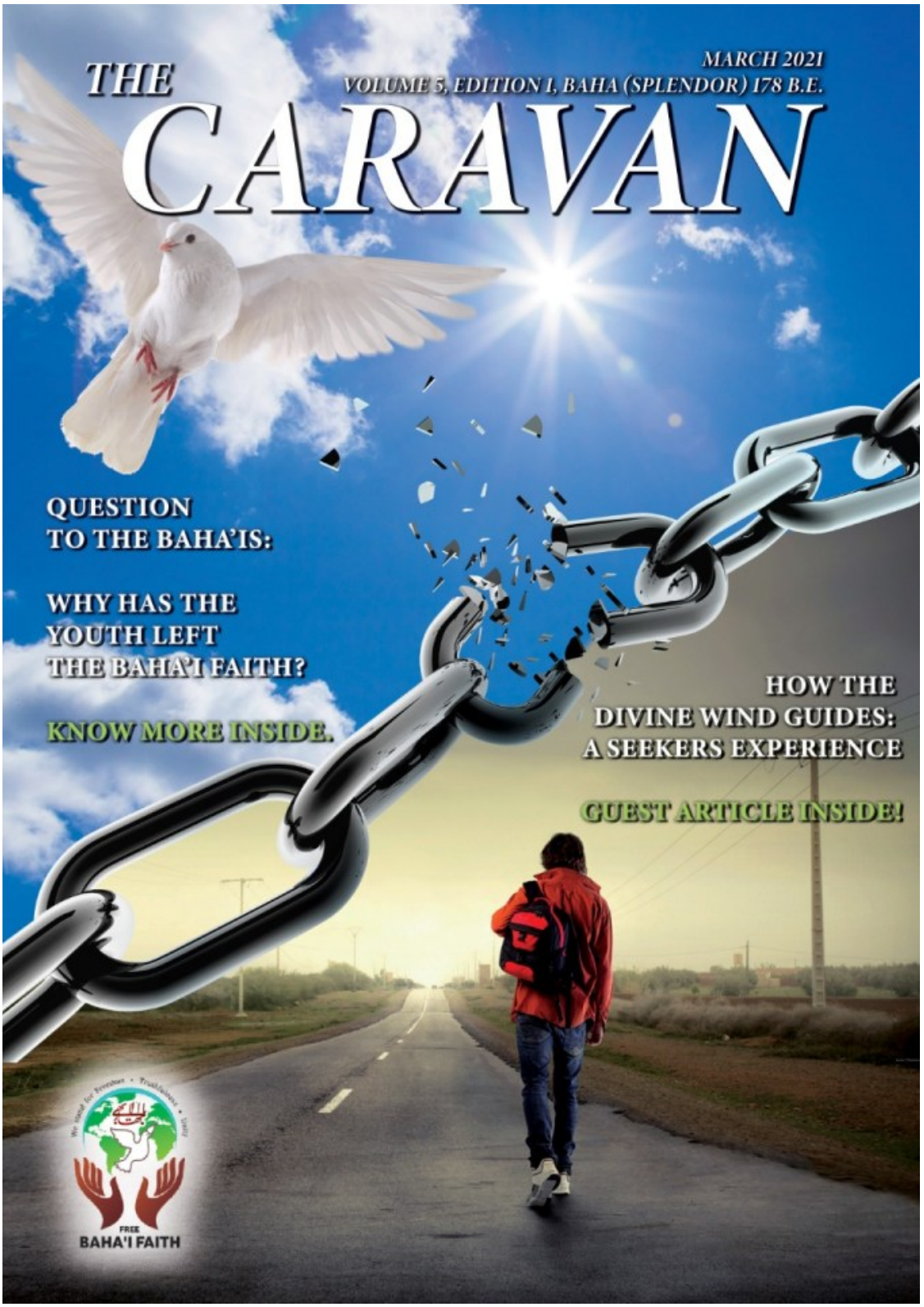

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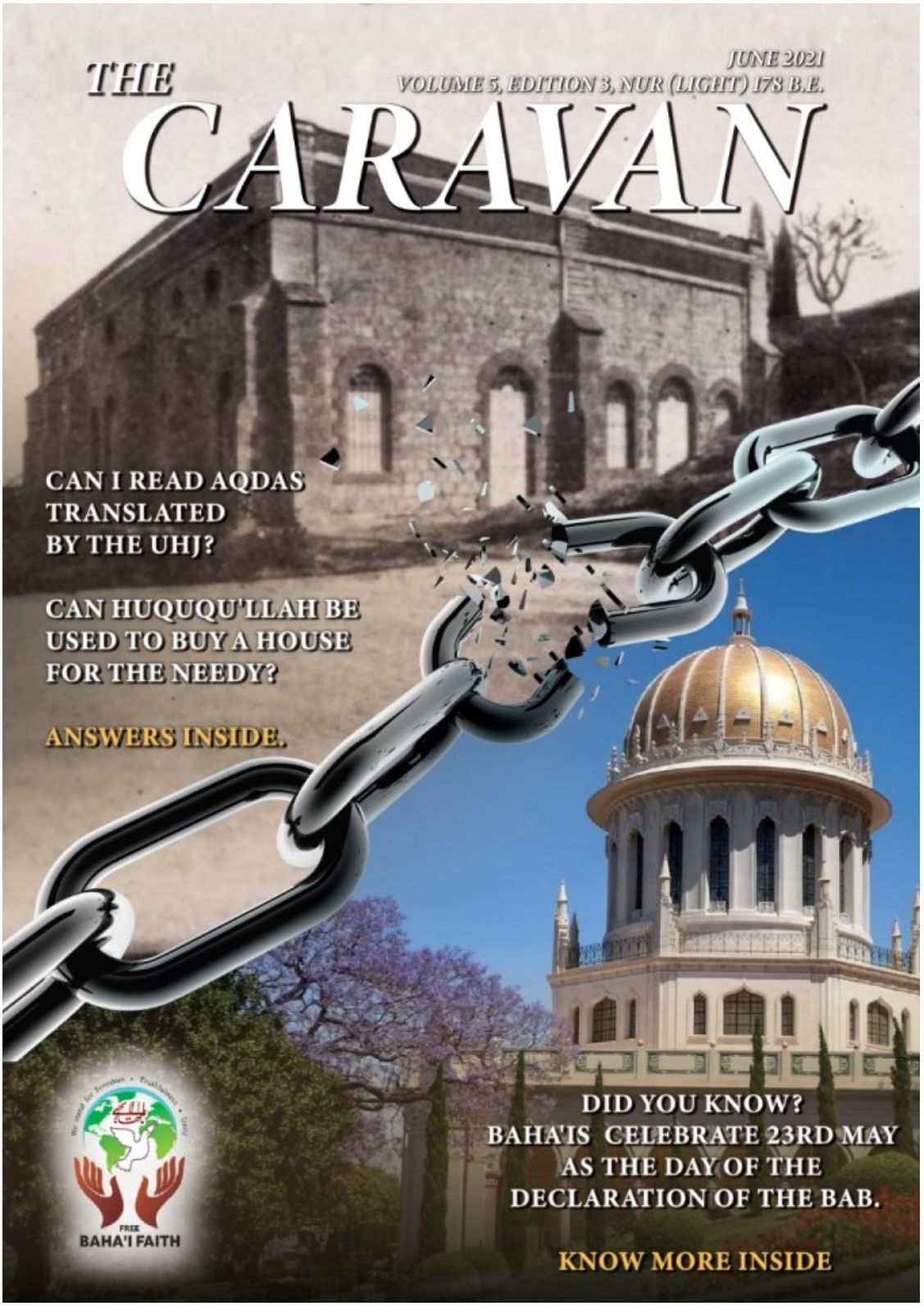
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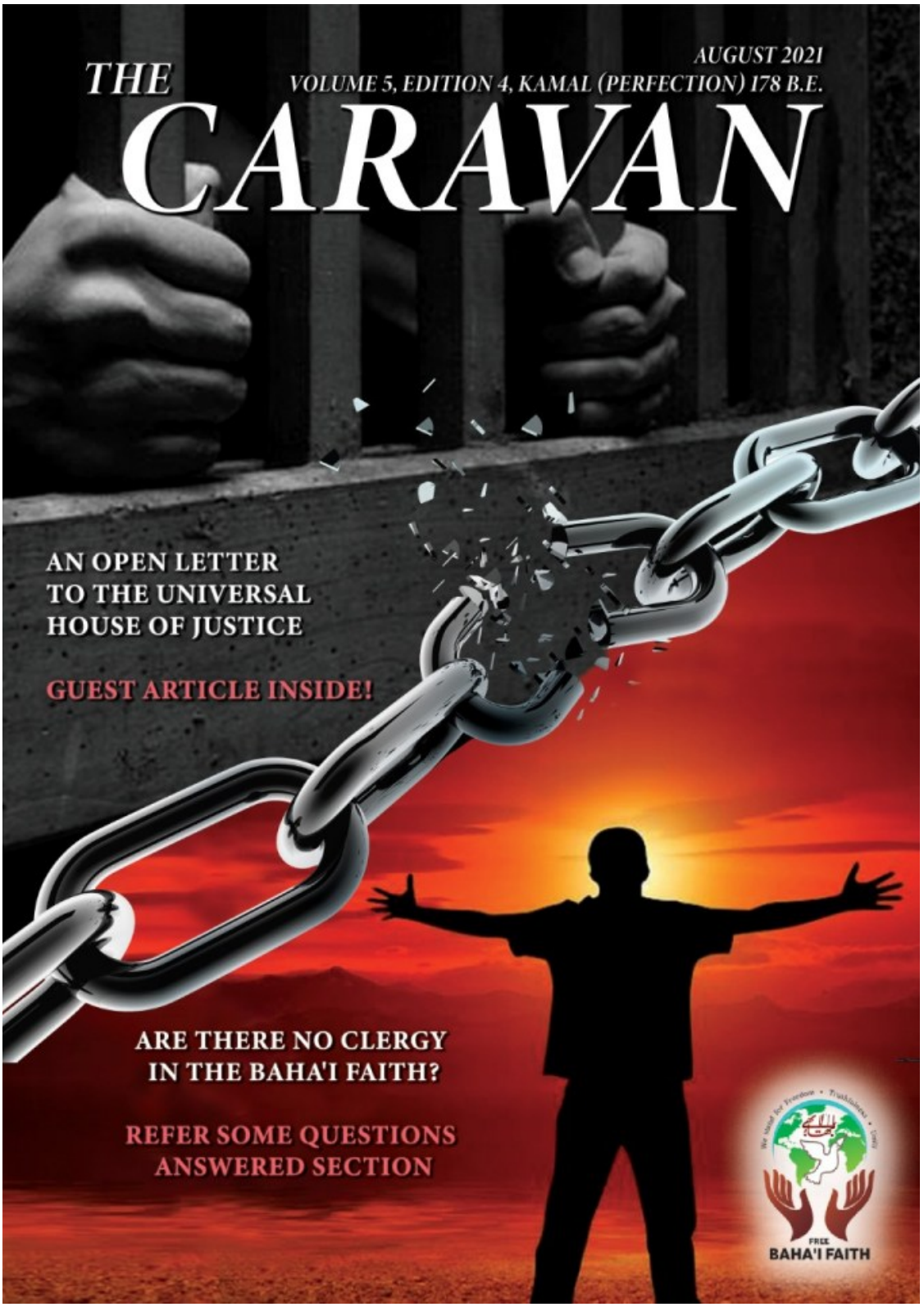

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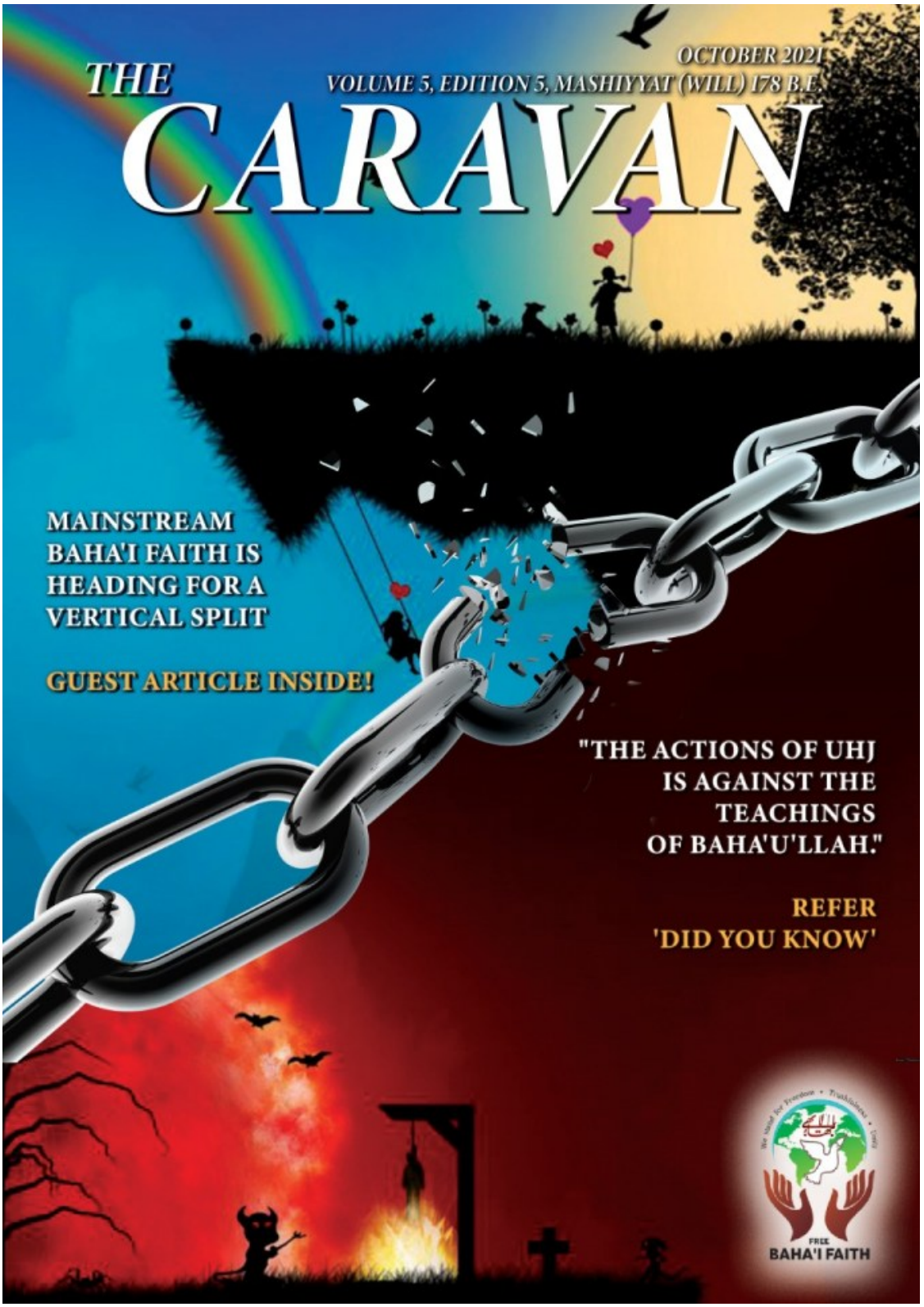
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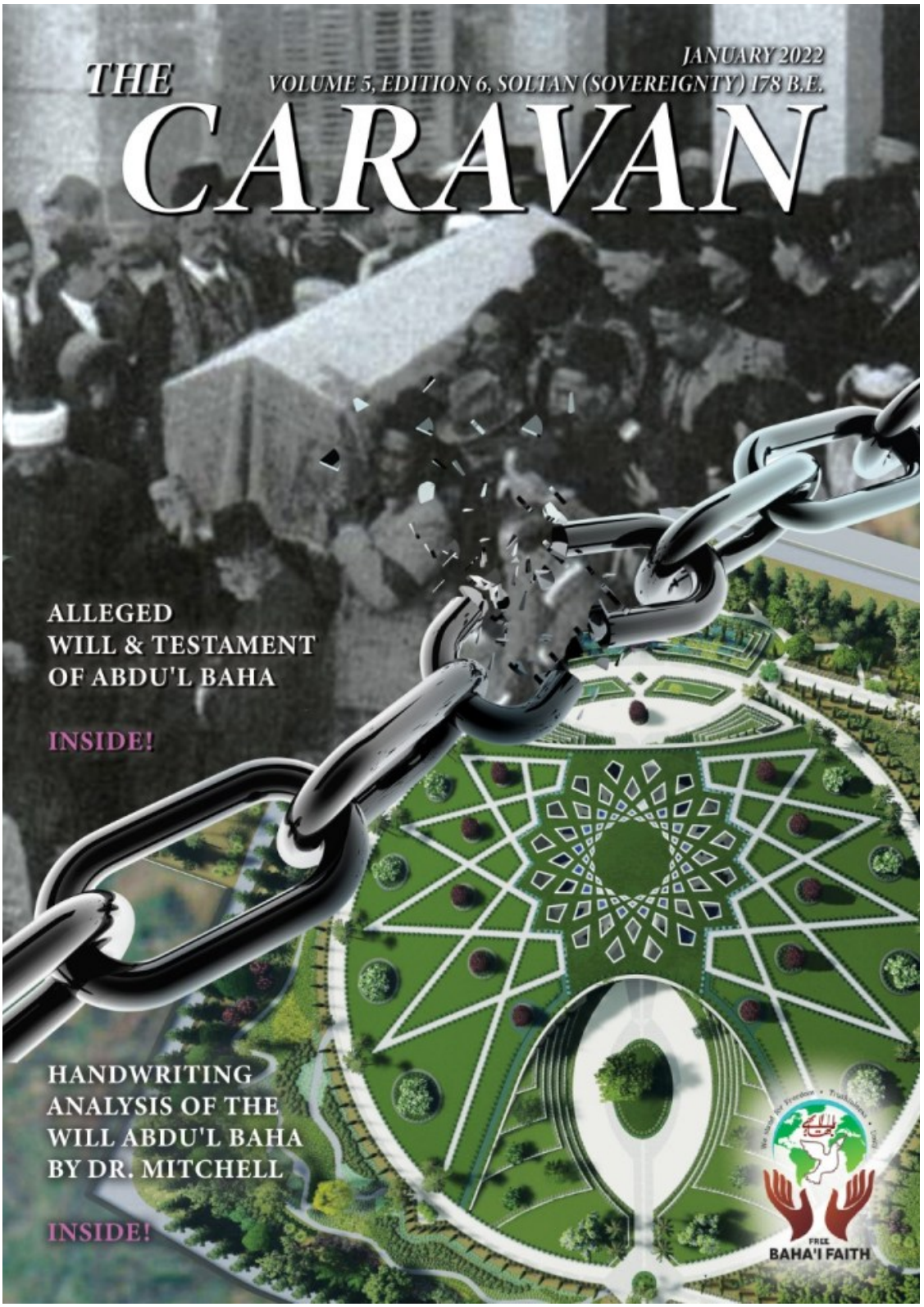
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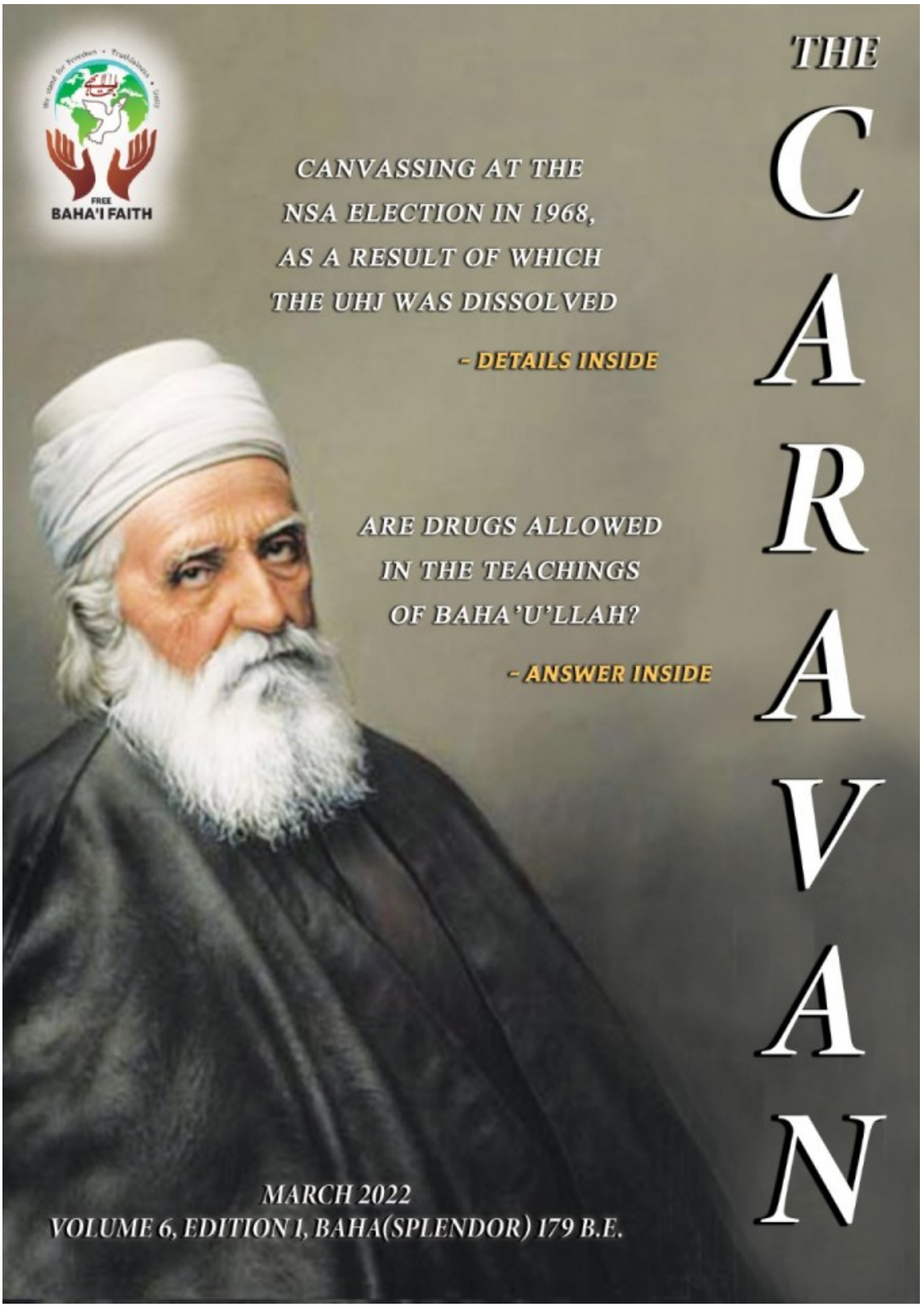

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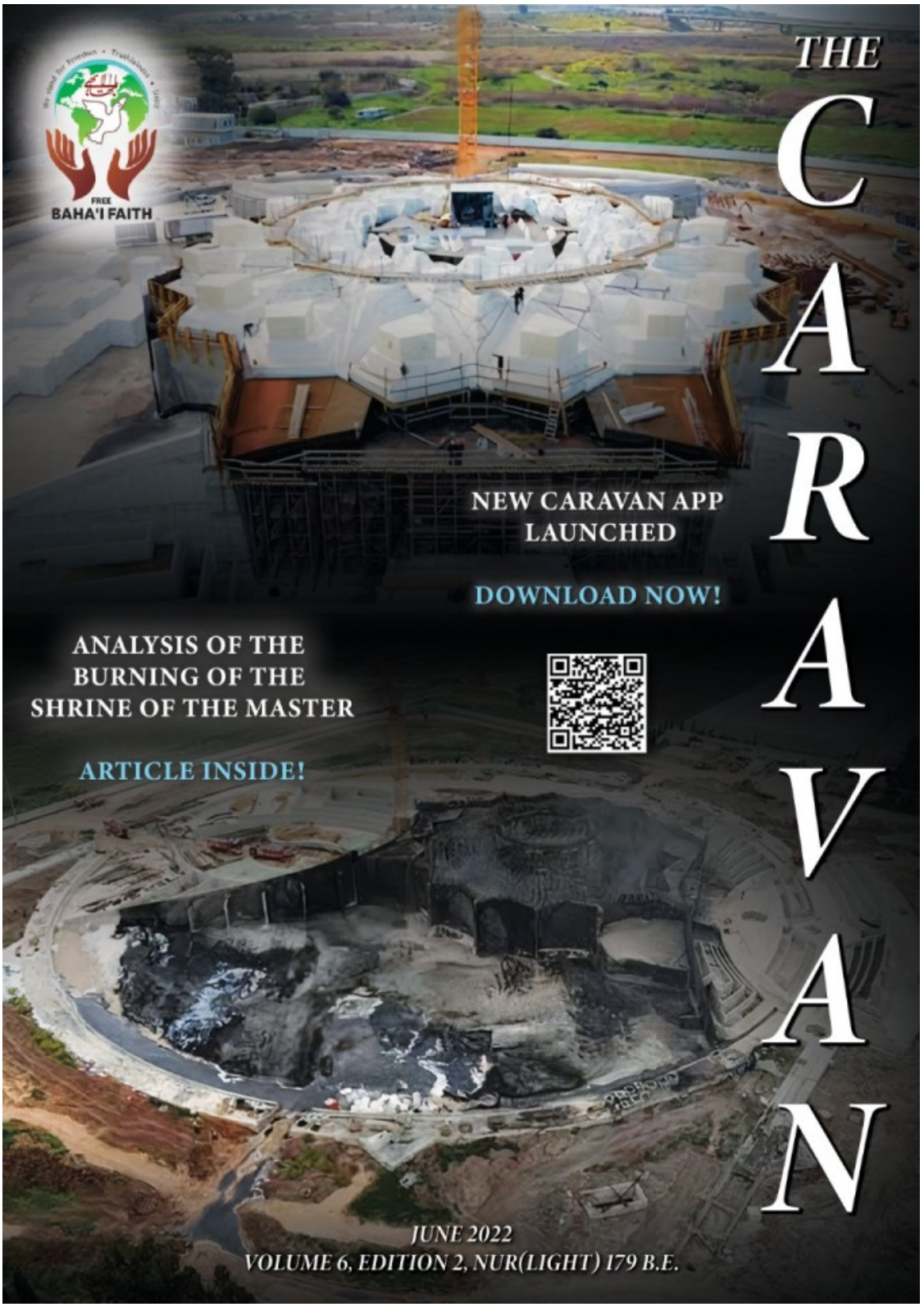

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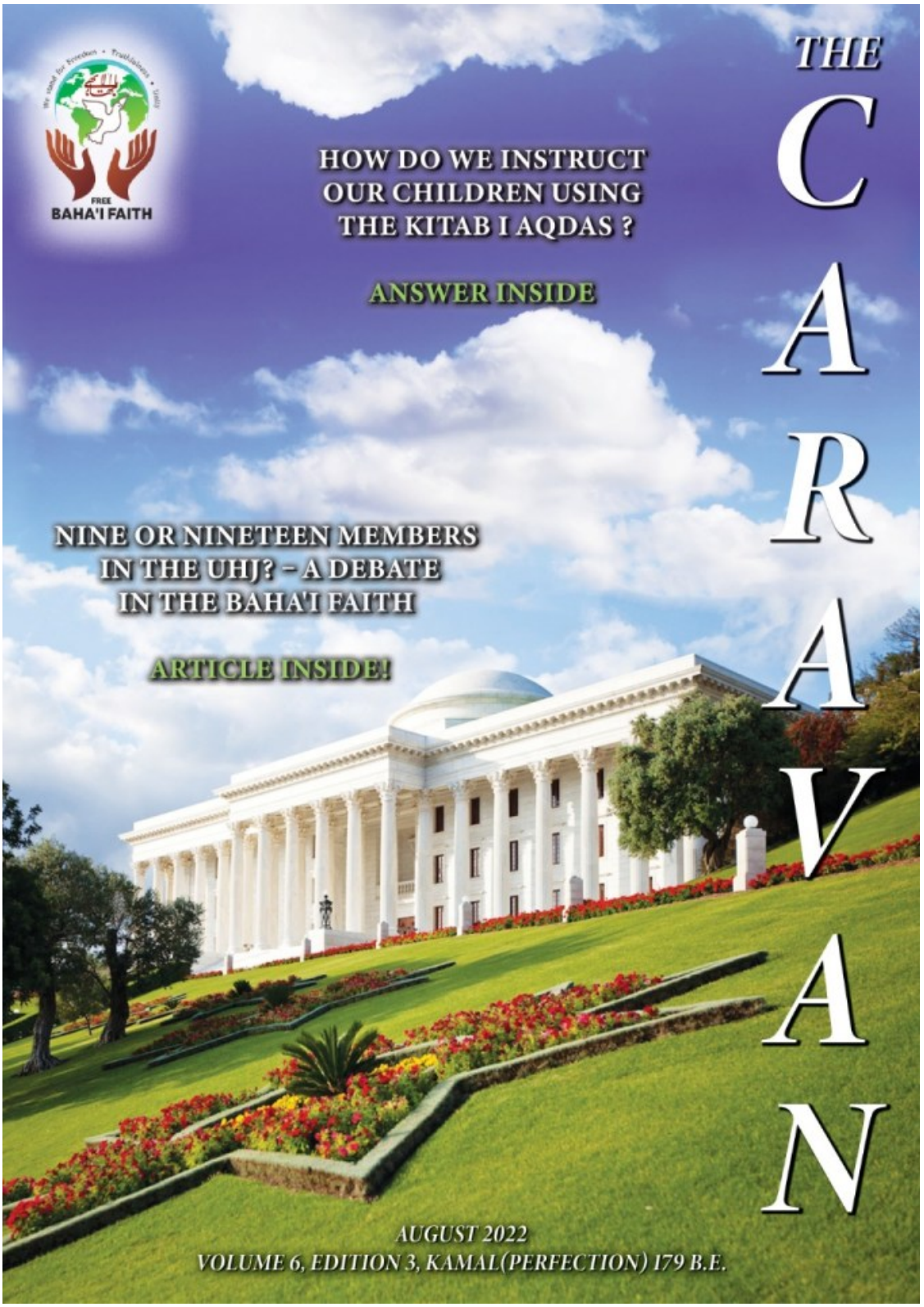

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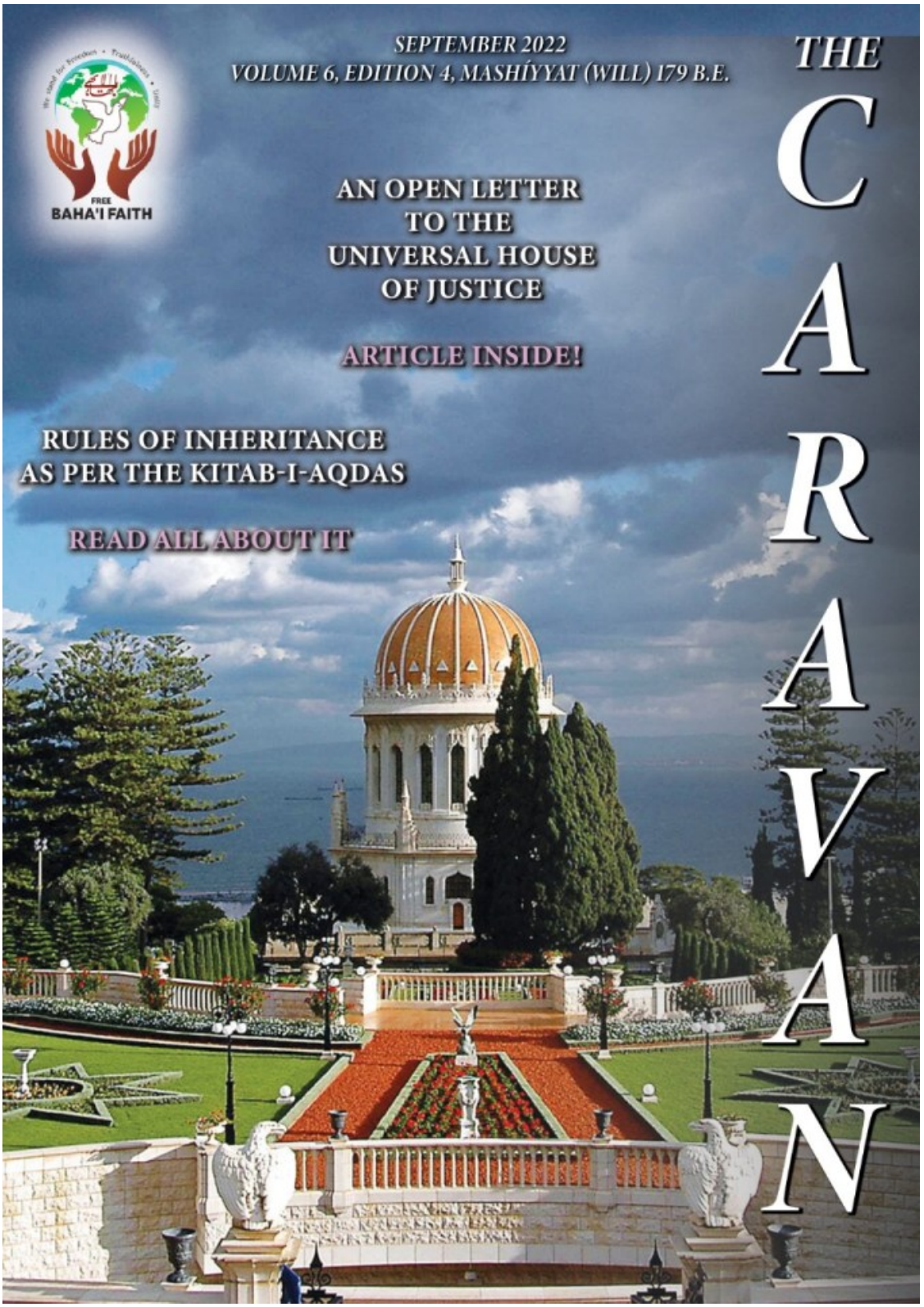
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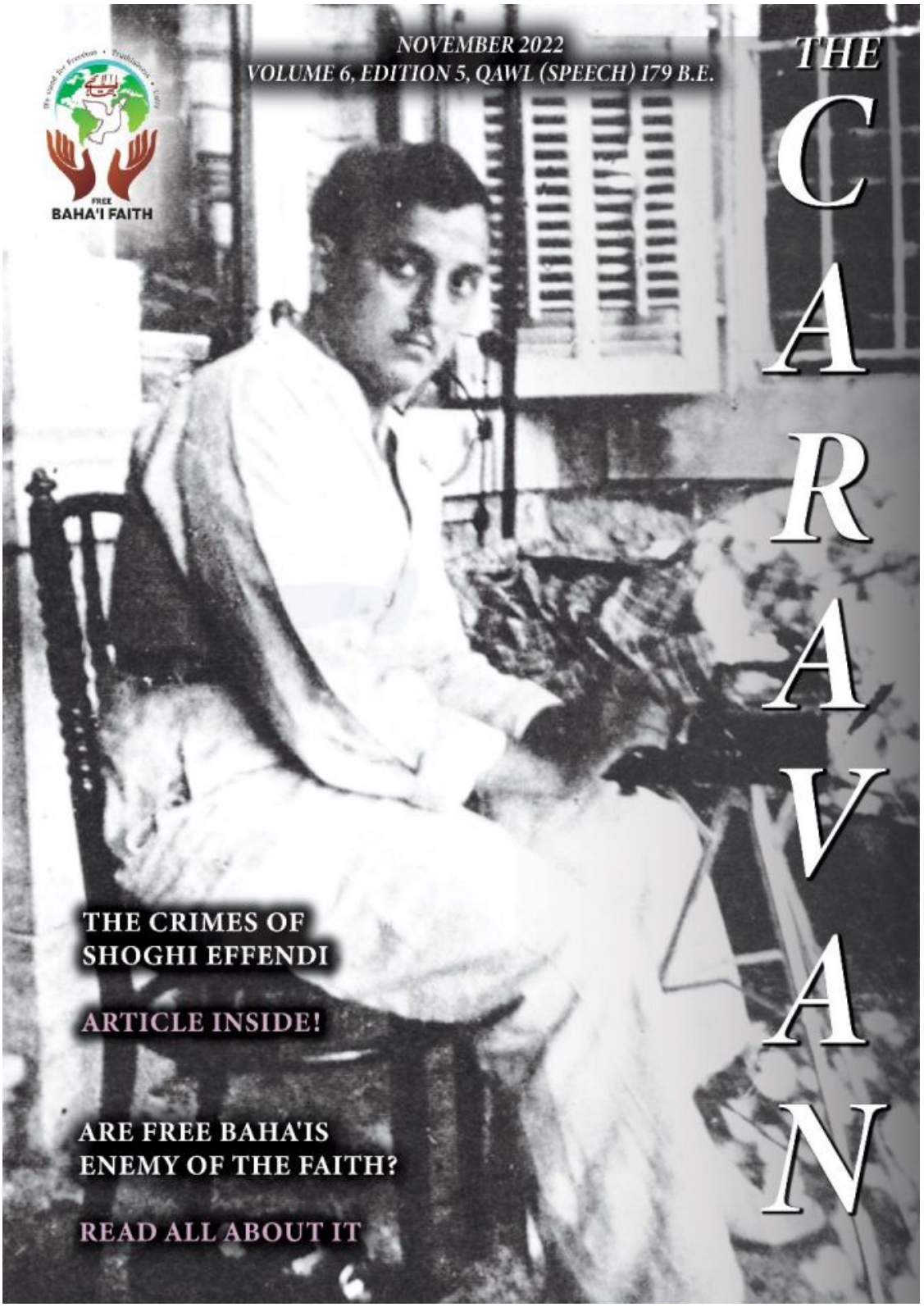
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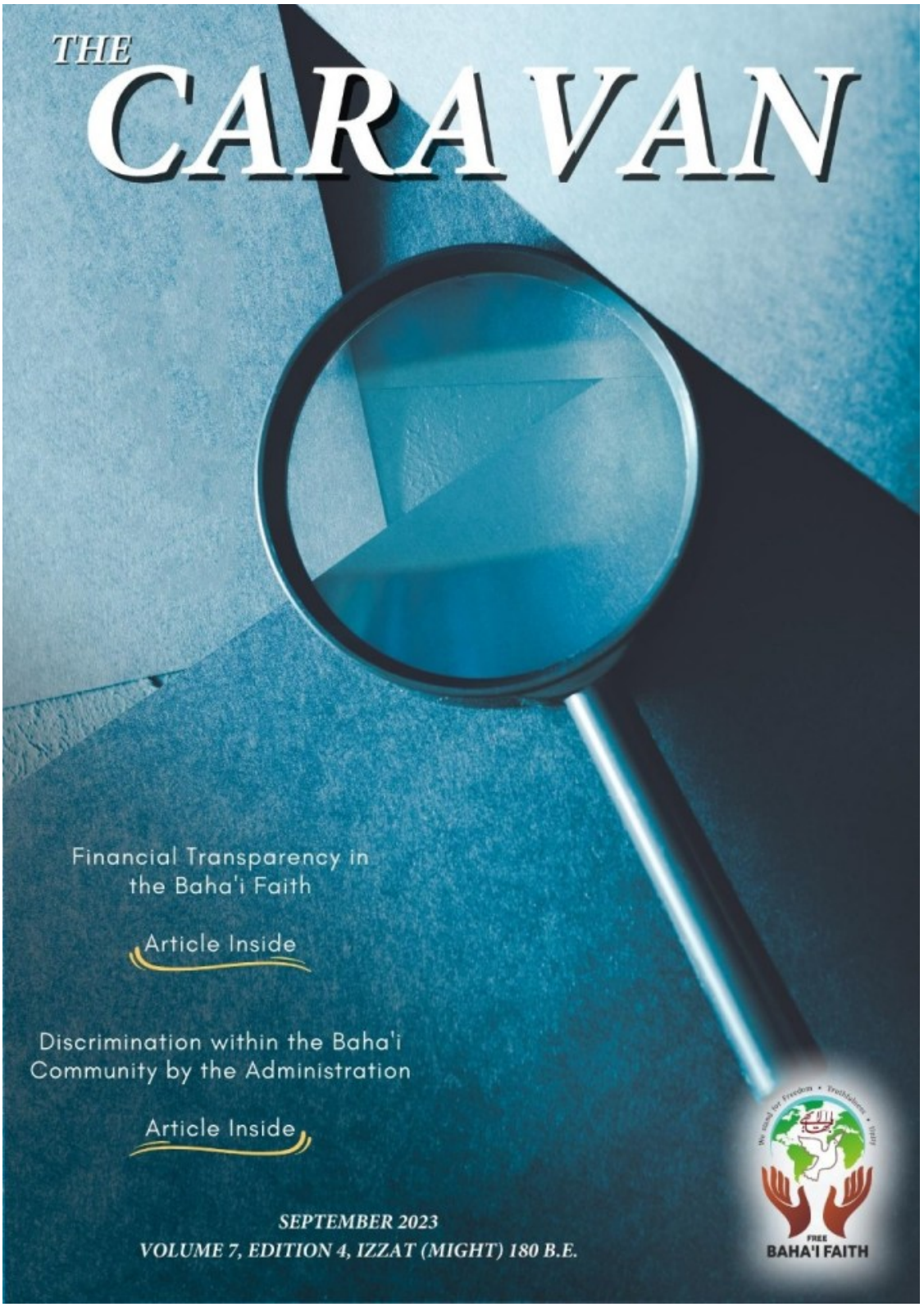

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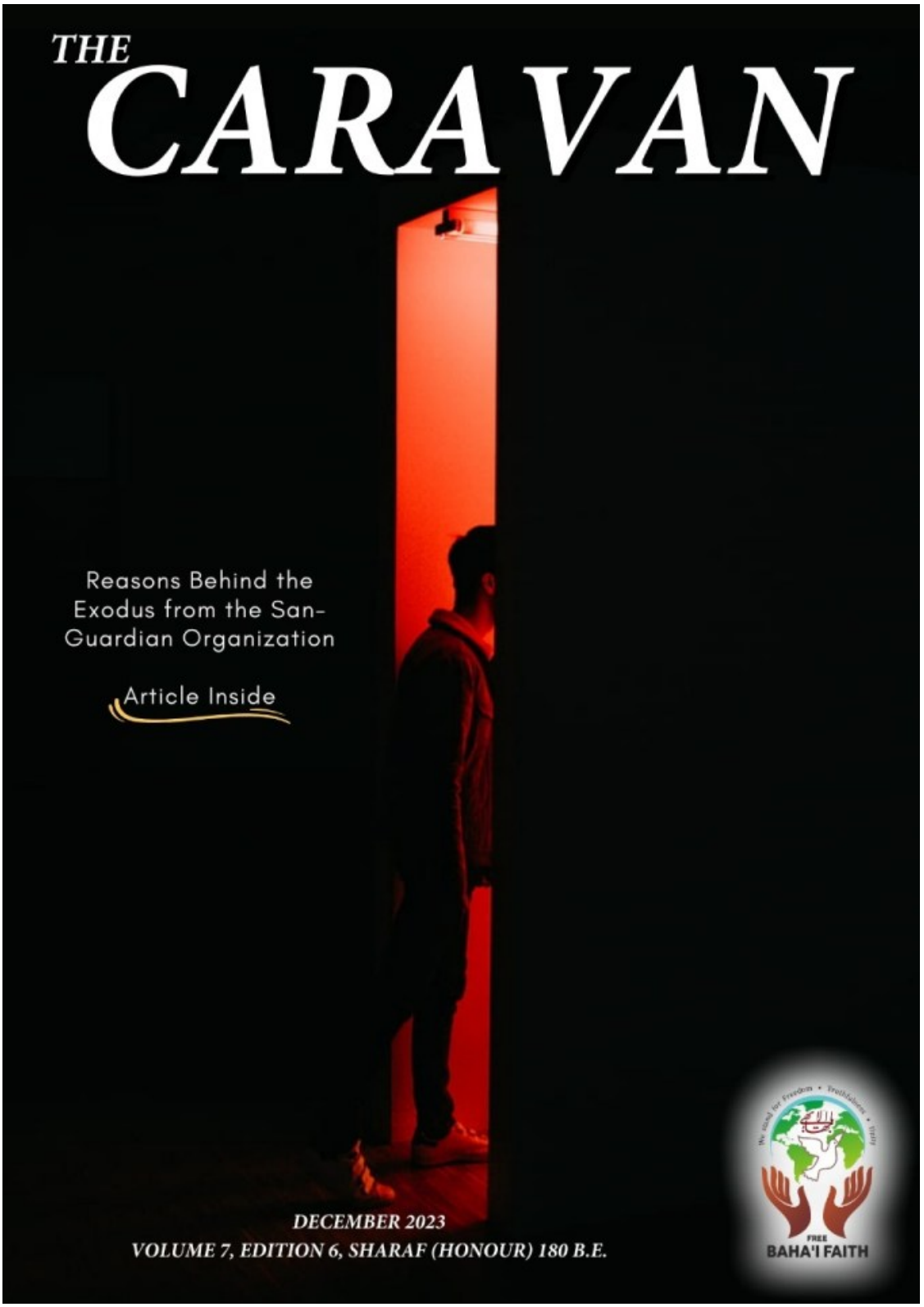

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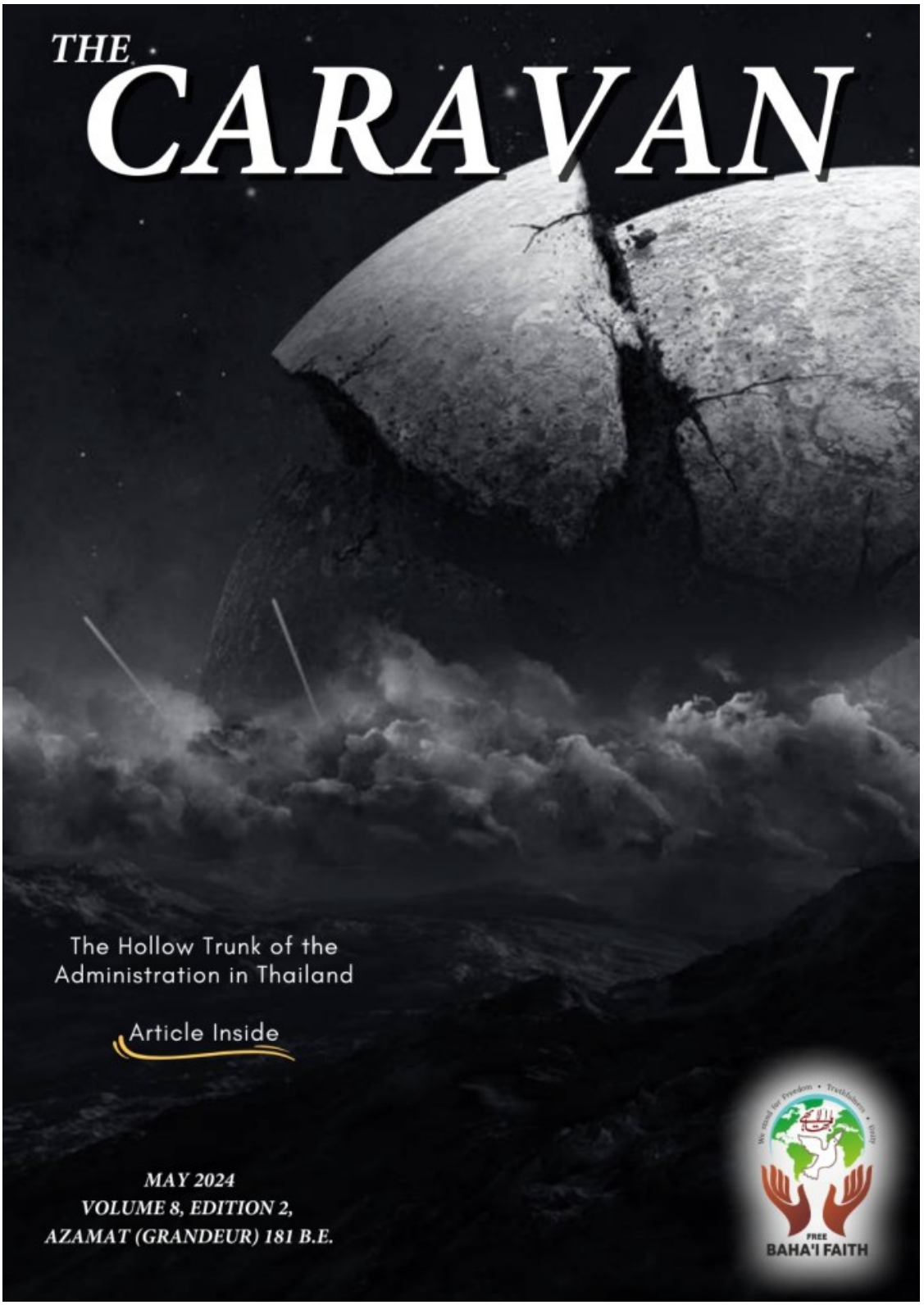

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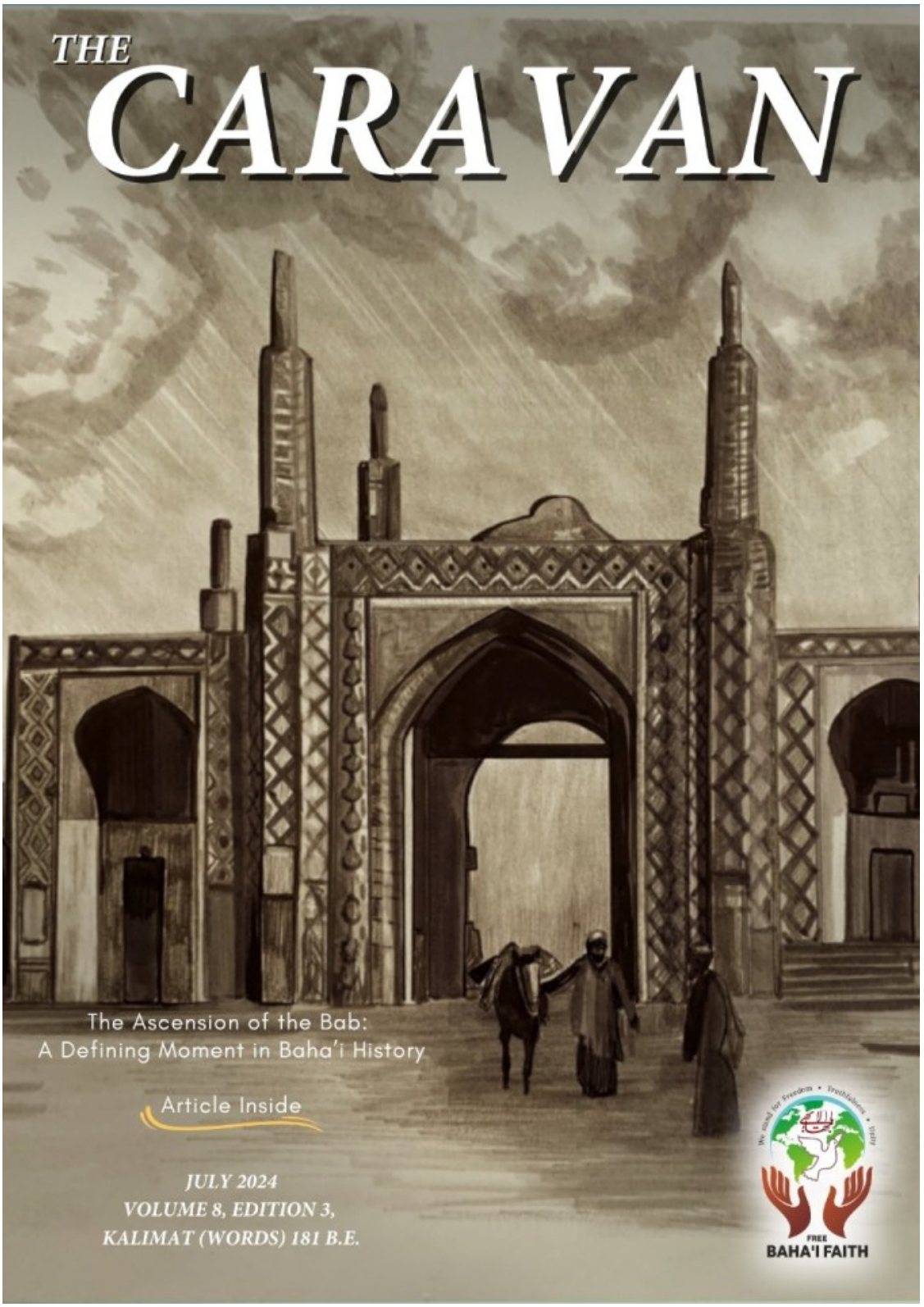

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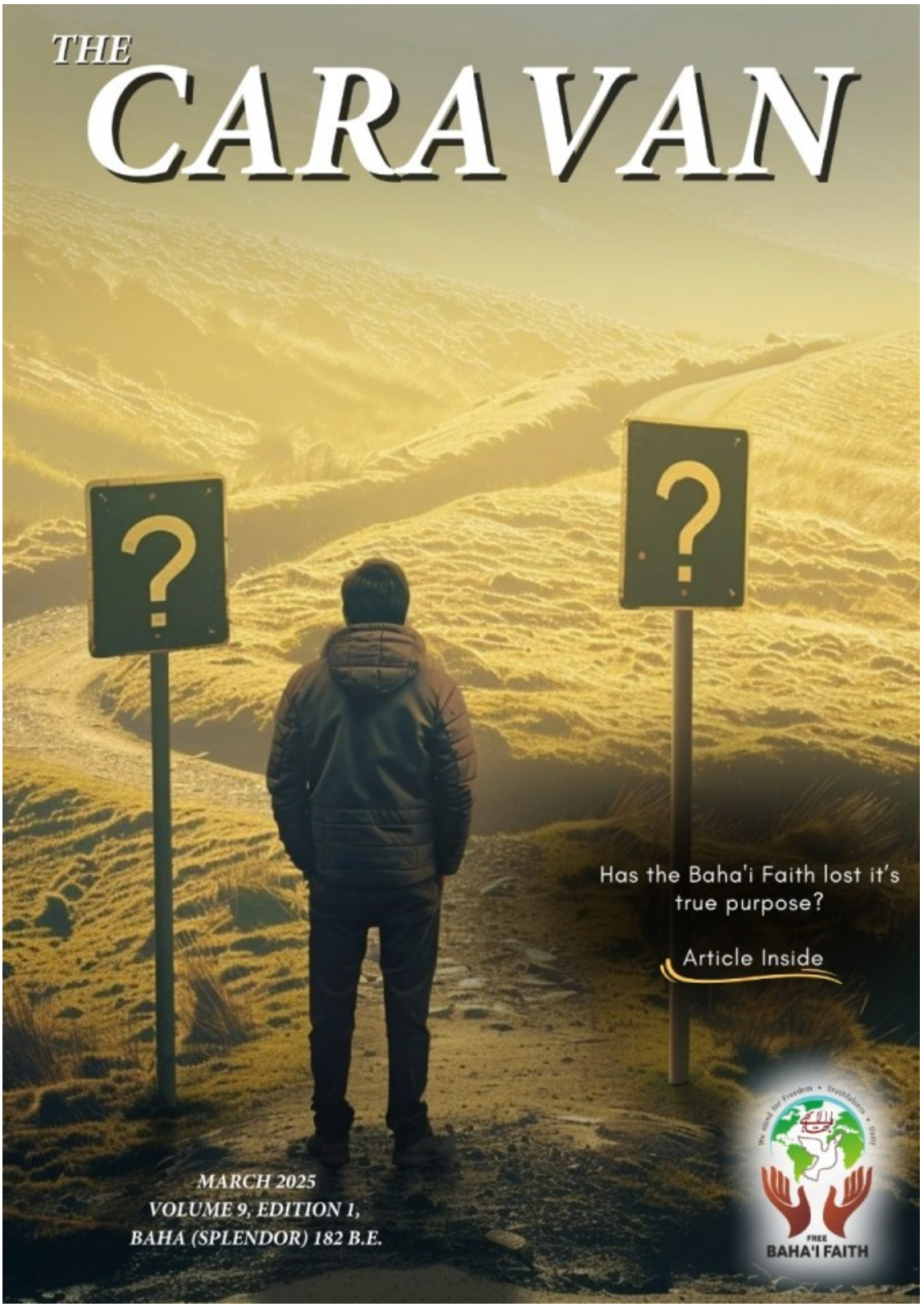

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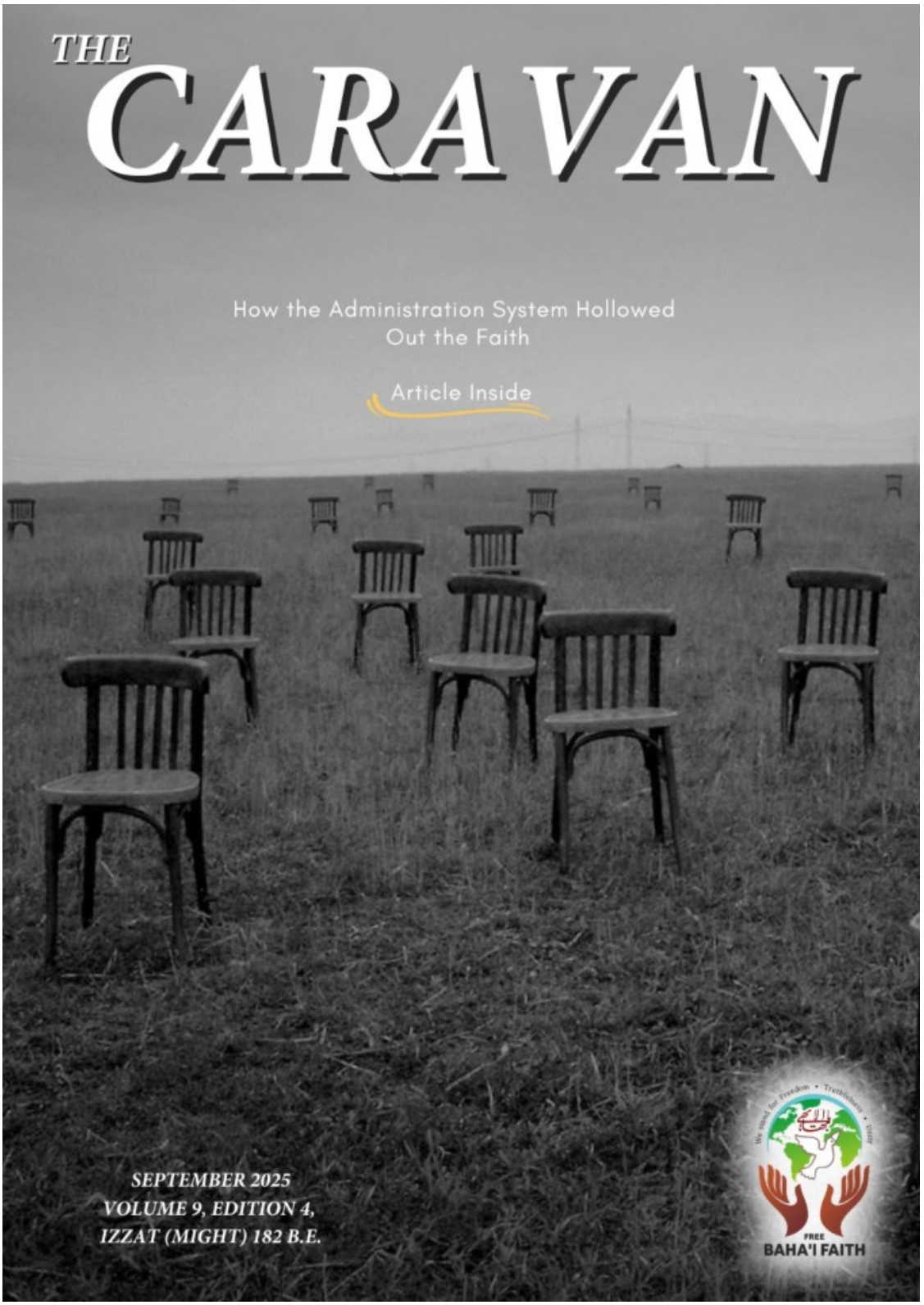

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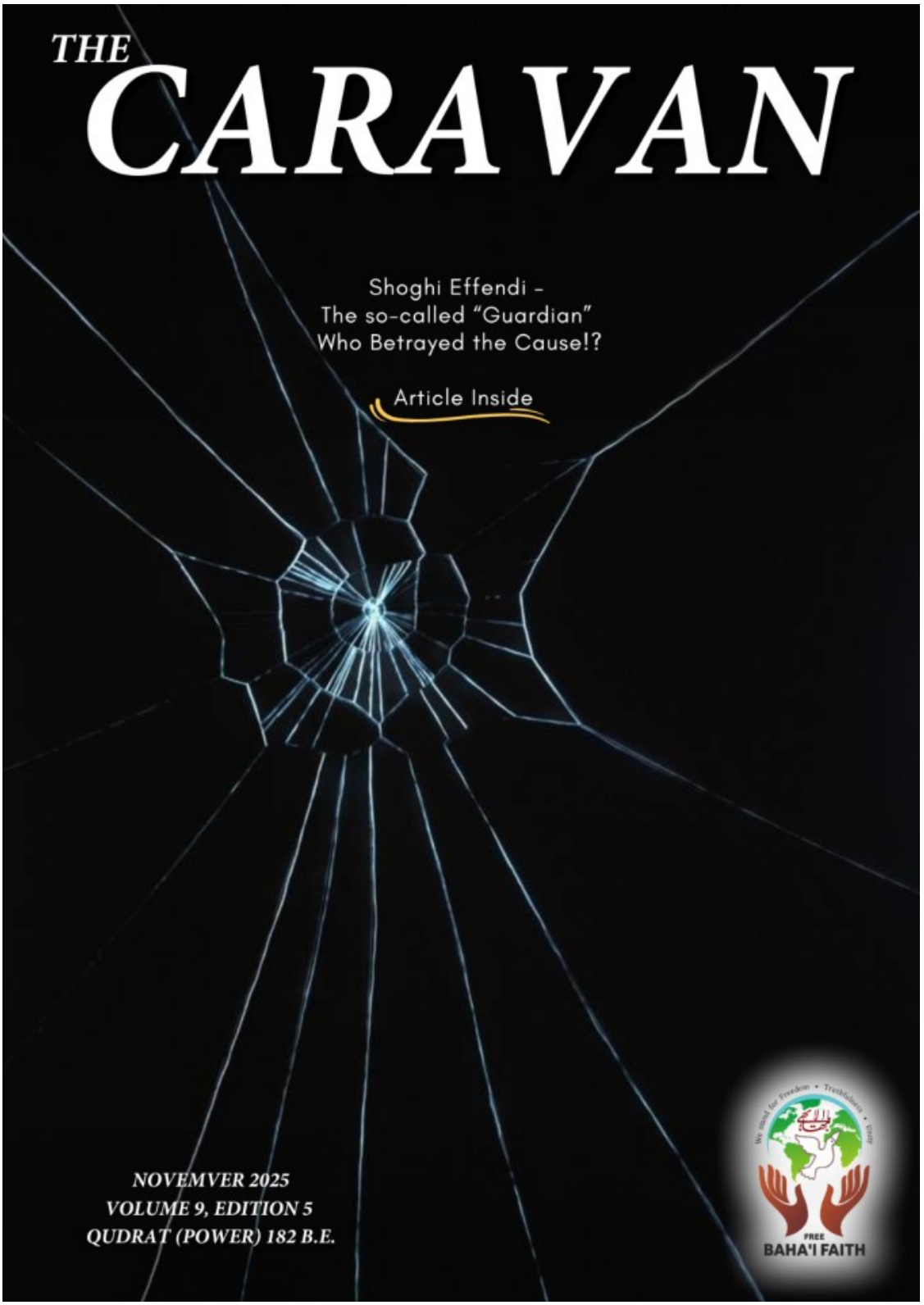

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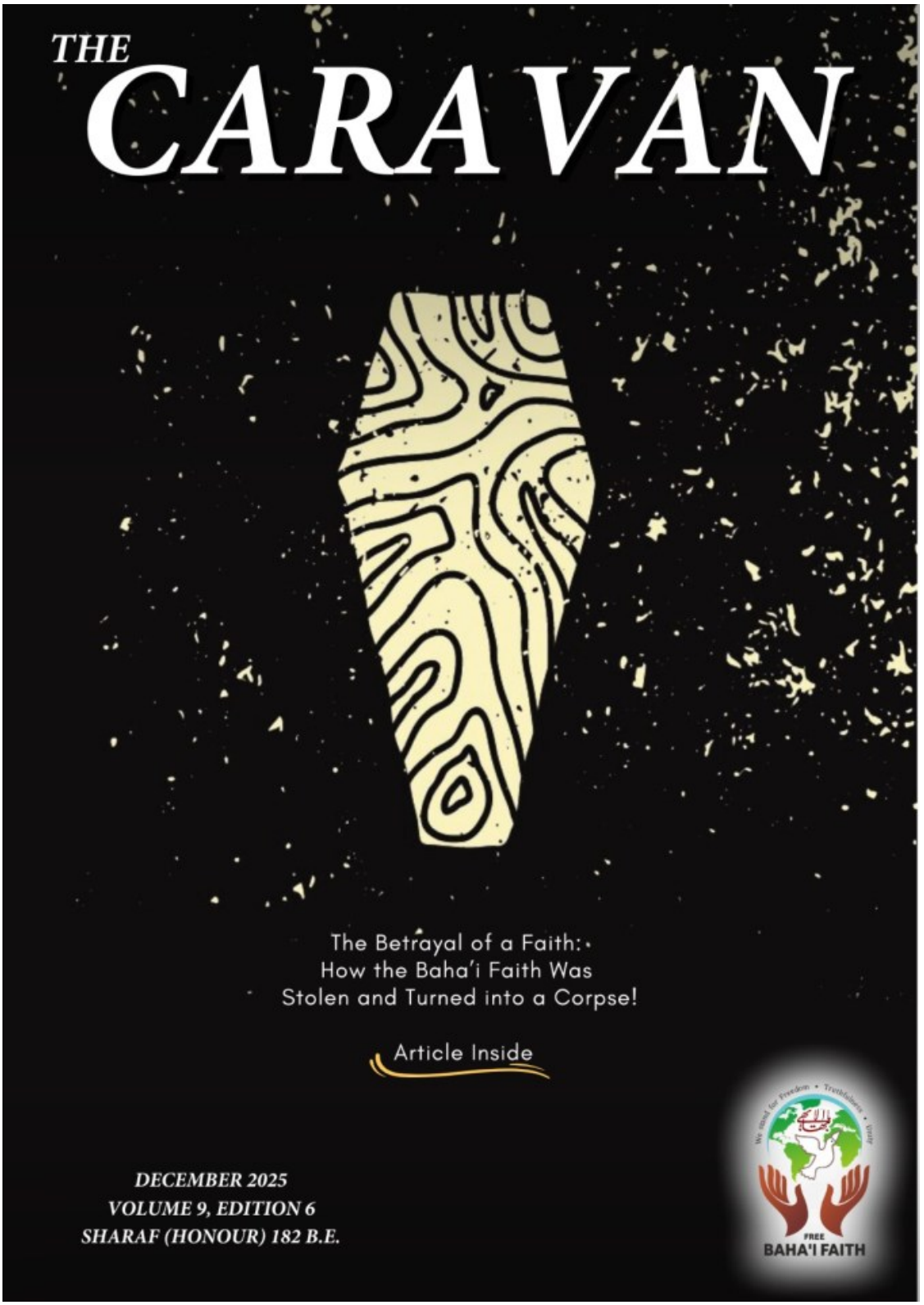

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Shoghi Effendi

Birth, early life and education: Shoghi Rabbani (Effendi) was born in Akká on the 1st of March 1897. He was a descendent of the Báb through his father, Mírzá Hádí Shírází, and of Baha'u'llah through his mother, Ziyá'iyyih Khánum, who was the eldest daughter of Abdu'l-Bahá.

He was not particularly known to be close to his grandfather Abdul Baha in terms of character and behaviour. Not being interested in spiritual activities, he hardly, if ever, accompanied Abdul Baha in his religious activities.

For education, Shoghi was sent to The Oxford University in England and during the course of his studies he was known to show lacklustre interest in the curriculum. On the other hand, he gained a particular notoriety for enjoying the high life. Noting his particular disinterest in in his very expensive education left many perplexed. When he was asked for the reason behind his lack of motivation he replied- "People study to earn their bread. Why should one study while he already has his bread ready" (he expected to be anointed as the care taker of Baha'i religion)

Marriage: Shoghi's marriage was fixed with his cousin Maryam, the daughter of Abdul Baha's son-in-law Mirza Jalal Shahid. However, developing cold feet Shoghi backed out and married Mary Maxwell.

His wife was the daughter of May Ellis Maxwell nee May Ellis Bolles. Mary never accepted the Last name of Shoghi Effendi till the very end maintained the Maxwell last name. She was later given the title of Ruhiyyih Khanum and Amatul Baha to make her persona more acceptable to the Bahai communities in Asia and Africa.

Conversion of Funds for Private Use

Ruth White: The subject converted funds to his own use. The Bahai religion and its Enemy the Bahai Organization by Ruth White, the Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont 1929.

Ruth White writes: "In the Autumn of 1919 I sent to Abdul Baha [i.e. Sir Abbas Effendi] an American Express Company check of Five hundred dollars and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing.

About four months after we arrived in Haifa as the guests of Abdul Baha. On the day before departure I asked Abdul Baha if he had received the check. Without a moment's hesitation and very emphatically he said that he had not received it. He repeated this a number of times, and seemed indignant that it had not been turned over to him.

I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdul Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter. He returned and said there was no record of the check. When I returned to America, I asked the American Express Company to look up the receipt of the check I had sent through their office, and on the back of it was the signature of the person who had received the cash. This person was Shoghi Rabbani [i.e. Shoghi Effendi].

I asked the American Express Company to Photostat this check for me, which they did. Herewith it is a reproduction of the check with the signature of Sh. Rabbani on the back. Here then is proof positive that Shoghi Effendi cashed out the check and also proof that the son-in-law [presumably Mirza Muhsin Afnan] who purported to enquire of the check did not do it at all. Otherwise, he would have ascertained in a few minutes from the office of the American Express Company at Haifa that the check had been cashed by Sh. Rabbani, as I had given the son-in-law the whole information, the date of sending, the name of sender, etc.

All of which shows that there was collusion between the son-in-law and Shoghi Effendi. Circumstantial evidence also points to the fact that Shoghi Effendi used the money to go to Oxford University.

For immediately after cashing the check he departed for Oxford, this despite the fact that Abdul Baha did not wish him to go. Some may naturally ask: How could Shoghi Effendi have cashed the check unless he had authority to do so. This he may have had. Yet the fact remain that the proceeds were never turned over to Abdul Baha. My readers may, therefore, draw their own conclusions."

Shoghi Effendi: A world class philanderer

Subhi's Payam-i Padar, PP. 143-146: has noted Shoghi Effendi to be a frequenter of men of magnificent physique and virility, a pervert who craved to be consorted with, a hermaphrodite requiring surgical operation to determine his sex.

Subhi had been an eyewitness on several counts to acts challenging common decency and on one particular occasion he states to have been challenged by the Shoghi Effendi to put his manhood to the test.

"Shoghi Effendi was possessed of peculiar nature and habit which cannot be properly described; his manly disposition was inconsiderable; he was continually desirous of cultivating friendship, and associations, with robust men and youth!"

"One night I was with him (meaning Shoghi) and Doctor Zia Baghdadi who was the son of a famous Baha'i who practiced medicine in America and had come to visit Abdu'l-Baha in Haifa. We were hanging around in Acre and were fooling about humorously like teenagers. While we were conversing, I left the room to attend to some matters and and when I returned, I observed that Doctor Zia had committed an unrighteous act… I was outraged and said: Doctor! What is this deed that you are doing?! Shoghi turned to me and said: "If you have manhood too then show it." I saw many similar acts and heard [similar] words from him many times and perceived that he must be lacking something."

Shoghi Effendi may be categorized "in the category of "hermaphrodites" in whom opposite qualities are embodied…" requiring surgical operation for adjustment.

Shoghi Effendi has "no feeling, attachment or devotion" for father, brother, sister, mother or friend. He issues orders which no sane man would give."

The Kashful-Hiyal (the Uncovering of Deceptions) by Abdul Husayn Ayati nicknamed Avarih, one-time chief Bahai missionary says: "it is not possible to categorize him as either male or female! Neither possessing feminine kindness and charm nor having mannish wisdom and sobriety! There are attachments in these kinds of people which is hard to find out. I am not aware if you have heard of that physicians lays down a man and by some medical treatment changes him to a female and vice versa. … I wish Shoghi had visited a physician in his youth and could be purified! That's why you don't see him having any attachment to his father or grief of his siblings; neither remembering his mother's pains to raise him nor recognizing his true friends!

He commands things that are not wise, and excuses that are far from rational. All this because of the same root problem. (Ref-Avarih's Kashf-al-Hiyal, Vol. II, 2nd impression, PP. 84-85 and P. 166; Vol., III 3rd impression, PP. 212-213)

"The command of Allah shall be executed" (a quote from Quran), forty days after Abdul' baha died and the customary mourning period ended the days of joy began for Shoghi. Now anointed as the "Guardian" of the faith and with vast sums of money at his disposal happy times had arrived for Shoghi!

Shoghi, oh you don't know who Shoghi was!

Hundreds of students studying in Beirut with Shoghi were witness to the fact that he had no inclination towards studies and his true passion lied in mollycoddling pretty boys and girls. Shoghi was known to spend time getting cozy with boys in dark corners of the dance floor. Ultimately, he failed in his studies and got infected with scabies which appeared on his hands forcing him to wear Chamois leather gloves and take medical treatment.

Shoghi and with that you knew who Shoghi was!

The guy who failed to get a diploma in Oxford as well as Beirut! The same Shoghi who when questioned by his classmate "why don't you pay attention to your studies?" replied: "what is studying all about? To find a piece of bread and mine is already prepared".

And the same Shoghi who during his first and last speech in London, for an audience of 16, Miss Rosenberg stood up and said: beloved Shoghi, sit down! People have no desire to listen to you and they have fallen asleep!" This 70-year-old lady then proceeded to the lectern and spoke". (Kashful Hiyal Vol 2 page 84-85 second edition)

Once someone saw Shoghi Effendi entering a private shower with the son of Mirza Baqir Shirazi, at the morning call to prayer (Azan) and followed them. There he witnessed what is difficult to describe. Upon confronting Shoghi he said: "The sense (eye) makes errors in sensing (seeing) and (what)you saw was an error"

The making of Shoghi Effendi

It was after the death of Abdul Baha, that his Will was read initially only to few 'old and recognised Baha'is'. Later it was made public after a few years. In the alleged Will of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi was anointed as the Guardian of the cause. The announcement of Shoghi as the Guardian came as a shock to many Baha'is who doubted the veracity and authenticity of his appointment. This was because Abdul Baha never introduced Shoghi as his successor during his lifetime.

However, nobody dared to question the authenticity of the alleged Will, lest they be excommunicated, except for Lady Ruth White. Ruth White made exhaustive inquiries to ascertain the authenticity of the alleged Will, including getting its handwriting analysed by the foremost expert in forensics Dr. C.A Mitchell, who declared the document to be a forgery.

Pleading an alleged inability to administer the duties of his office and to recover from the shock caused by the death of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi withdrew albeit temporarily from his responsibilities as a guardian and retired into solitude for an expensive swiss vacation for 8 months (using Baha'i funds) leaving the guardianship of Baha'i affairs in the hands of a few elder members of Abdul Baha's family, notionally naming with Baha'u'llah's daughter, the supreme leaf, as a titular head.

While Shoghi was away from public glare, grounds were being prepared for all Baha'is to accept him as the Guardian of the faith without question. Upon Shoghis return to Haifa, he was declared publicly as the Guardian of the faith. He then took over the reins of the Baha'i administration, and demanded ready and explicit obedience from the servants of God, in default of which any servant of god was liable to excommunication or to summary expulsion from the faith under the flimsy pretext of disobedience. Shoghi Effendi brooked interference. His decisions were absolute and final and his words authoritative.

As the divinely-ordained guardian all faithful were decreed to obey him. Shoghi began to organise the religion into a controlled administration in order to have a stronger grip over the Baha'is under his command. He decreed the establishment of spiritual assemblies who in turn worked for him. All activities

undertaken by these assemblies worldwide were reported to Shoghi Effendi. At the same time, orders were dictated to Bahais by Shoghi via the same channel of assemblies.

His Achievements of excommunicating

After taking the post of guardianship, Shoghi soon began to misuse his power as the guardian of the faith. He began to excommunicate all those from his family who raised any form of objection or dissent against him. Shoghi systematically under various flimsy pretexts managed to excommunicate the entire family of Abdul Baha.

These included his sisters, brothers and cousins. He excommunicated Ruhi Effendi for travelling to America for the purpose of preaching, without seeking his permission. All of this shameless display of oppression was to ensure loyalty by fear. Since the holy family of Abdul Baha knew the fact that Shoghi was far removed from religion of Abdul Baha Shoghi found it imperative to remove them from the faith in order to clear all obstacles to his unchecked power.

The Death of Shoghi Effendi – The end of Guardianship

As Shoghi was known as the mystery of God, even his death remains a mystery till date. Although there is a good amount of circumstantial evidence to show that his sudden death was in fact a murder and he was poisoned.

In the beginning of the year 1957 Shoghi Effendis health was deteriorating and on the advice of his doctors and his wife he agreed to go for medical treatment to England. Upon reaching London on 20th October 1957 they checked into a hotel rather than one of the many welcoming homes of the Bahais there. During this period of their stay in this hotel in London, it was reported that Shoghi effendi was diagnosed with Influenza.

At the time the plan for the “10 years crusade” was being drawn with the consultation of John Ferraby (who was a ‘hand of the cause of God’ and the secretary of the NSA of England) and Hasan Balyuzi Afnan (who was a member of the NSA of England). At that moment the succession plan to Shoghi was not in place and it was unclear as to who will head the faith after him. Mary Maxwell who was present there and was aware of this fact kept tab on the deteriorating health of Shoghi Effendi. She kept asking him if there was any pain in his body to which Shoghi replied in the negative. He kept saying that only his finger pained and he felt tired.

Mary Maxwell then proceeded to administer an unprescribed and undescribed medicine to him without the approval of his physician. That was the same night Shoghi suddenly died. Mary Maxwell then proceeded to cable the bahais worldwide lying to them that the guardian is very sick when infact she was the one who had already bumped him off. He was later buried at a cemetery in London.

Shoghi died childless and none from the Aghsan could ever succeed him. A philanderer with taste in men, who lived a lavish lifestyle at the cost of the money donated by the poor bahais for his “cause”, who disobeyed the teachings of his grandfather finally perished and is now resting in a poorly visited cemetery in London far-far away from the Holy Land.

Shoghi Effendi and Grandsons of ‘Abdu’l Baha

Respect of Shoghi Effendi towards children of ‘Abdu’l Baha

Here we would like to bring the facts about Shoghi Effendi’s cruelty towards the Holy family of ‘Abdu’l Baha, as he become Guardian of faith by will and testaments of ‘Abdu’l Baha, he turned dictator and started ex-communicating the holy family of Baha’u’llah, the grand children who served the faith in Europe and America. Readers might be wondering why he has ex-communicated the entire grandchildren of ‘Abdu’l Baha, what was that heinous crime which they committed, that Guardian has to take such drastic step to ex-communicate them, not only this even he ordered that if someone asked about their well-being will also come under wrath of Guardian. First let us list the Noble family members of and Grand Children of ‘Abdu’l Baha.

‘Abdu’l Baha had four Daughters

1. Ziayyeh Khanum
2. Touba Khanum
3. Rouha Khanum
4. Monavar Khanum

1. Ziayyeh Khanum, married to Mirza Hadi Afnan
   Children from this marriage:

- Shoghi Effendi Rabbani
- Ruh-Anghiz Khanum
- Mehr-Anghiz Khanum
- Hussain Effendi Rabbani
- Riaz Effendi Rabbani

1. Touba Khanum Married Mirza Mohsen Afnan
   Children from this marriage:

- Ruhi Effendi Afnan
- Soroya Khanum
- Soheil Effendi Afnan
- Foad Effendi Afnan

1. Rouha Khanum, married to Mirza Jalal Effendi Shahid
   Children from this marriage:

- Maryam Khanum
- Munib Effendi
- Zahra Khanum
- Hassan Effendi.

1. Munavvar Khanum married to Ahmad Effendi Yazdi.

No Issue.

Direct Excommunication

- Ruhi Effendi Afnan: Grandson of ‘Abdu’l Baha
- Zahra Khanum: Granddaughter of ‘Abdu’l Baha and wife of Ruhi
- Soraya Khanum: Granddaughter of ‘Abdu’l Baha and wife of Feyzi Effendi
- Foad Effendi Afnan: Grandson of ‘Abdu’l Baha
- Mehr Angiz: Granddaughter of ‘Abdu’l Baha and Sister of Shoghi
- Feyzi Effendi: Grandson of Baha’u’llah
- Touba Khanum: second daughter of ‘Abdu’l Baha
- Rouha Khanum: Third daughter of ‘Abdu’l Baha
- Mirza Jalal Shahid: Husband of Rouha Khanum
- Furughiya Khanum: Daughter of Baha’u’llah
- Agha Sayyed Ali Afnan: Husband of Furghiya Kahnum

Let us examine the cause and effects of these excommunications from the Book of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab “‘ABDU’L BAHA’S GRANDSONS”

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab was confident secretary of ‘Abdu’l Baha for many years he was well versed in Baha’i teachings and trusted lieutenant, he was sent to teach and propagate faith to America, there are numerous tablets of ‘Abdu’l Baha in respect of Mira Ahmed Sohrab after the sad demise of ‘Abdu’l Baha when Shoghi took the charge of Baha’i administration he quickly realize popularity and influence of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, he side-lined him, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab wrote many books for faith, when he saw Shoghi is excommunicating the entire family of ‘Abdu’l Baha he wrote a Book “**‘Abdu’l Baha’s Grandsons**” in which he raised his voice for the oppressed souls of ‘Abdu’l Baha’s Grandsons.

Page 24-26

The year of Disgrace

The law of excommunication puts an absolute ban on those who are *expelled from the Faith. The families of these persons* and their *fellow*-believers must leave the ostracized individuals alone. They must neither communicate nor associate with them. They must break all ties of friendship and of humanity even; for, if they deviate one hair’s breath from this law, they *themselves* fall into the same ditch.

Thus, as time goes on, the numbers of the excommunicated increases;

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

For a few are generally to be found, here and there, who are willing to risk ease and safety in order to follow their generous impulses. Such evidently was the case in the instance of Touba Khanum; it probably is the case in the instance of Rouha Khanum. However, in the instance of Ziayyeh Khanum, the Guardian cables that his *parents strongly condemn Mehr-Angiz’s action. Thus, Shoghi* Effendi’s father and mother have been forced to publicly denounce and repudiate their own daughter. Hereafter, they must be as strangers to her. They can never approach her in her hours of trouble or illness. They will never hold their grandchildren in their arms. Such is the Baha’i Cause in this year of disgrace — 1942.

A Fact Beyond Realization

I intend to take up the matter, treating it in connection with historical data and in the light of reason; and, in

order to simplify the subject as far as possible, I will centre my thoughts on the personality of Ruhi Effendi Afnan. His excommunication and the reasons given for it tell the story of all *the rest*.

Ruhi Effendi Afnan has twice visited the United States; he has lectured before numerous Baha'i gatherings and outside groups; his articles on the Baha'i Cause are published in Baha'i publications and the records of his loyal services to the Guardian and the Baha'i organization are spread on the pages *of Baha'i News*. Knowing full well that he has not deserved the treatment accorded him at the hands of his cousin, Shoghi Effendi, I am *taking it upon* myself *to* vindicate him, as far as I am able.

Having experienced excommunication together with the ostracism of all those who are associated with me, I naturally sympathize with other excommunicated persons. However, this is not the reason that impels me to raise a voice of protest at this juncture.

During eight years, I was fed, clothed and educated by 'Abdu'l Baha. Throughout that time, the Master's daughters were most gracious to me and I carry in my memory lively tokens of their kindness. I associated most intimately with their children, and vividly remember the ardent respect of these young ones for their grandfather, and their devotion to him. I hold each and all of them in high regard.

I never objected to my own excommunication, nor did I take it at all s*eriously; but* the excommunication of the very family *of* 'Abdu'l Baha has shaken my being to its foundations. I am amazed and indignant. I am outraged and horror-stricken. The fact that Shoghi Effendi has dared to expel from his own household these souls, in whose bodies run the blood and life of 'Abdu'l Baha, is beyond realization. The reasons given for their

Excommunication are childish to the extreme, having nothing to do with their faith and love for the Baha'i Cause.

In the writing of this book, I have not had the opportunity of consulting with any of the members of 'Abdu'l Baha's family. It is certain that none of them would *consult* with me. Thus, I have asked permission of no one, and am alone responsible for every word appearing here. My *own* conscience is my sole guide.

Another reason for my taking up the pen in this regard is that a number of Baha'is have written to me on this subject. To put it very mildly, they are disillusioned, shocked and confused. They cannot square the actions of the Guardian with his role in life. They are wondering what *precipice is around the corner; toward what* swamp *of* despair the Baha'i Cause is being driven. They are anxiously asking if there may possibly be a modern rational explanation for these medieval and irrational procedures.

We will therefore face the issue: and, as a first step, will examine the Bulls of Excommunication as presented in the up-to-date guise *of the* cablegram.

Text of *Cablegrams* (Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

Ruhi's sister married covenant-breaker Feyzi, whose mother joined and supported arch-enemy Muhammad Ali and whose father 'Abdu'l Baha denounced openly and repeatedly as His deadly enemy. Ruhi's family concurred, inform all believers (that) all manner (of) communication (with) excommunicated family (is) forbidden.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

(Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

(The) flagrant disloyalty (of) Ruhi's family compels me (to) disclose information so long (and) patiently withheld (from) American believers concerning his failure (to) obtain my approval (of) his second visit (to)

America. His Subsequent conduct regarding *his marriage* which I refrained from revealing (to) anyone except your Assembly, as well as Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge, should now be *made kn*own (to) believers. Confident *(of)* Unshakable steadfastness (of) exemplary American Baha'i Community-

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

Answer sent on November 17th by the National Spiritual Assembly:—

Informing friends (of your) message (about) Ruhi's family. Assure complete obedience protection unity (of) sacred Faith.

(Cablegram received on November 21, 1941)

My confidence (in) immovable steadfastness (and) unstinted loyalty (of) American believers (is) reinforced.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani. —*Baha'i News;* December, 1941, No 149, pp. 1-2

From Page 11

PROTEST

Against the Excommunication of Members of Baha'u'llah's Family

signed by Leaders of Religion and Educators

May 1942

In these days when the principles of humanity are threatened on all sides, there is urgent need for men and women of good faith and purpose to band together for the upholding of the common rights of man, within their own communities and religions and within the communities and religions of others.

It is with this thought in mind that the undersigned consider conditions within a minority group, namely the Baha'i Cause, and make passionate protest against the recent excommunication by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Cause, of certain members of Baha'u'llah's family. Excommunication, as we take it, is an order for severance of ties between the excommunicated and their fellow-members in Faith. It is a un-Christ-like act which, although practiced in medieval ages by religious authorities, is now totally condemned by enlightened persons of every rank and profession.

Therefore, we go on record, at this hour when the Four Freedoms enunciated by the President of the United States are ringing around the earth, endorsing whole-heartedly and without qualifications whatsoever a sentence from Mr Roosevelt's historic speech before Congress, delivered in January 1941:—

"The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world."

On the basis of this principle we insist that, in the New World Order which all of us picture and strive for, the irreligious practice of excommunication be set aside forever and replaced by the practice of Love and Tolerance as set forth throughout the ages by Christ and the great company of prophets, seers and spiritual teachers.

We urge men and women of all Faiths to consistently oppose, and to refuse to recognize, any and all exclusion acts within their religion, and under all circumstances to keep open the doors of their temples and hearts to their fellow-believers and to their fellows of every race, creed and colour.

Signed by:

Mr. David P. Berenberg, Author: *A Worker's World;* Educator,Lecturer Kedarnath DasGupta, Author: *Essence of Religions* and Founder of

World Fellowship of Faiths Dr. Georgia Dunn, Professor of Psychology, Hunter College, NewYork

Mr. William Floyd, Editor: *Arbitrator;* Author, Educator Archbishop William H. Francis of the Old Catholic Church Miss Frances Grant, President of Pan-American Women Association, New *York*

Mr. Jacob Greenwald, Counsellor-at-Law, New York Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Minister of Community Church, New York Mr. Gordon S. P. Kleeberg, Counsellor-at-Law, New York Commander R. E. Lambert, U. S. N. R.; Editor: *Sourcebook* Rev. Leon Rosser Land, Minister of Bronx Free Fellowship, NewYork
Dr. John Rowland Lathrop, Minister of Church of the Saviour,

Brooklyn, *New* York Mr. William Pickens, Director of Branches, National Association

for the Advancement of Colored People, Washington, D. C. Dr. Haridas T- Muzumdar, Author: *The United Nations of the World;* Lecturer, Sociologist

Mr. John J. O'Neill, *Science Editor, New York Herald-Tribune R*ev. A. J. Muste, Secretary, The Fellowship of Reconciliation, NewYork

The Key. Dr. Charles Francis Potter, Author; *The Story of Religion;*

Founder and Leader of The First Humanist Society of New York Miss Lisa Sergio, Radio Commentator

Dr. Krishnalal Shridharani, Author: *My India,* A/y *America;* Lecturer Dr. Anup Singh, Editor: *India To~Day;* Author: *Nehru, the Rising Star of India*

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton, N. Y.
Dr. Eliot White, Clergyman, Writer, Lecturer

PROTEST Comment and Some Notable Letters

In the Old World, we were not our brother's keeper; but were of the cautious *type, looking for our own* interests and letting ethers shift for themselves. In the New World that is to be, we shall recognize the fact that all of us are part of the human organism and will boldly apply ourselves Io the task of keeping that organism in good shape. The averted eyes, the careful picking of one's way on the other side of the road will no longer be the acceptable attitude; but the straight look and the helping hand will be the characteristic of a new citizenry, *everywhere in the world.*

Of such an order are the distinguished educators who have condemned the action of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Baha'i Cause, taken against several members of Baha'u'llah's family. Excommunication, to their minds, has no place in modem society; intolerance, exclusion and cruelty has no place in any society, and so they have condemned this deed and gone on record in a *Protest* that wil make a landmark in religious history. The Protestant Minister, the Catholic Bishop, the Jewish Rabbi, the Hindu, the Sikh have arisen together to protect the Baha'i—their brother before God and man. So have the boundary lines grown thin under the penetrating warmth of the Religion of Love.

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton New York, in a letter dated March 25, 1942 writes to us that their Young Men's Class studied Baha'ism the previous week and is to consider Shoghi Effendi's excommunications the following Sunday. Dr. Stockdale states that he is ready to do anything "to help banish this ancient barbarism of excommunication from off this earth" and has actually communicated directly with the Guardian on this subject. He encloses a copy of his letter, which w£ herewith reproduce:—

CHIRM OF CHH1ST IN AMERICA

Melhodiet Branch George Maychin Stockdale, Minister

Clinton, New York, March 25, 1942.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Baha'i Cause, Persian Colony, Haifa, Palestine. Dear Guardian of the Baha'i Cause,

Your Chris like Grandfather, Abdul Bah a, when asked on one occasion, "What is a Baha'i?" replied,

"TO BE A BAHA'I SIMPLY MEANS TO LOVE ALL THE WORLD: TO LOVE HUMANITY AND TRY TO SERVE IT; TO WORK FOR UNIVERSAL PEACE AND UNIVERSAL BROTHER. HOOD."

(J. E. Easlemont, "Baha'u'llah and the New Era," page 70.)

I would like to make the above my own definition of what it is to be a Christian. On this definition the Hindu Gandhi and the Buddhist Das Gupta are both Christians and Baha'is, as well as true Hindus and Buddhists respectively. Some of my Baha'i friends do me more honour than I deserve by telling me that I am a Baha'i, although I am just trying to be a Christian.

If we agree on the above, and I hope we do, it is the more amazing to gel word of what are called, and seem to be, your excommunications of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, your* cousin; his wife; your sister and *others*.

What troubles me, my dear Sir, is the method employed. If we love all humans, and the Love of God cannot dwell in us unless we do, how can we use any other than Love and Persuasion as our means of seeking change of mind and heart in those we deem wrong? Can excommunication be a method of Love?

Now far be it from us to prematurely make up our minds in this controversy. We would hear your side. Sir. Yet we assure you that even if you should submit proof positive of the commission of the more heinous crimes by any or all of the excommunicated, (which I am sure you wouldn't,) still would we say that the WAY of LOVE demands we retain community with the vilest of sinners. THEY NEED LOVE EVEN MORE THAN NINETY and NINE SPIRITUALLY TRANSFORMED SOULS, in whom GOD (LOVE) DWELLS. That seems dear to me from both the teachings of Christ and of Baha'u'llah, interpreted too, by Paul and 'Abdu'l Baha respectively.

It troubles me too that it is reported that you are not too sure amid this world madness just what loyalty we owe to God and what to the state. We are blessed beyond many here in America, as in Britain, in that the Draft Law here specifically makes room for us pacifists, who could not disobey God at the command of man, no matter what the consequences. We know you have the cares of a world gone mad in suicidal slaughter on your mind and heart. Yet it would be heartening to have from you a word, clear as crystal, that Baha'ism officially "although making no attempt to bind the consciences of its individual members, will NOT OFFICIALLY ENDORSE, SUPPORT OR PAR-T1CIPATE IN WAR." I have slipped into the exact words of our Methodist Branch of the Christian Church, with which I agree one hundred per cent.

Yours, strong in the Faith that LOVE (GOD) alone can win,

(Signed) George May chin Stock dale

Shoghi Effendi has not replied to any of these protests.

The Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi: Losses and Losses

1-Introduction

After the deaths of the Bab and Baha'u'llah, bitter quarrels regarding the succession arose among the believers. Fortunately on the death of 'Abdu'l Baha no one disputed the succession. This, however, did not indicate that all the followers of Baha'u'llah welcomed the accession of the Guardian, and were ready to obey him. In the early years of the ministry of 'Abdu'l Baha, most of the members of the family of Baha'u'llah vigorously protested against what they considered unlawful assumption of authority on the family members.

2-Shoghi Effendi did not shared the contributions with his family members

It is reported on good authority that the so-called guardian Shoghi Effendi kept all the income for his plans and purposes, and failed to share it with other members of the family of 'Abdu'l Baha, who kept quiet lest they "make a breach in the Cause of God." (5)

3-Shoghi Effendi excommunicates every member of his family

It seems that Shoghi Effendi, pleading inability to enter upon the duties of his office forthwith, retired into solitude for several years after his return to Haifa, leaving the management of Baha'i affairs in the hands of the older members of the family of Abdu'l Baha. Bahiyya Khanum, the "Supreme Leaf," the daughter of Baha'u'llah" who had remained loyal to her brother, became the "titular head" of the movement, while Munira Khanum, the grandmother of Shoghi Effendi, who had induced her husband to make him the Guardian and successor, was the power behind the throne. (6)

After a time, however, Shoghi Effendi began to realize the extent of the authority vested in him by the Will of Abdul-Baha, (7) came forth from his seclusion, and proceeded to exercise his power as guardian of the cause. Acting in accordance with the provisions of the Will, he "took over the reins of the Baha'i Administration, and demanded ready and implicit obedience from the servants of God, in default of which any servant of God was liable to excommunication or summary expulsion from the faith under some pretence or pretext.... His decisions were absolute and final, and his words authoritative."(8)

It is not surprising that this policy brought the guardian into conflict not only with numerous believers but also with the members of his own family, and resulted in their excommunication. The first person to be purged by Shoghi Effendi was his grandmother Munira Khanum, wife of Abdul-Baha, the first lady of the Baha'i realm, to whom the guardian, to a considerable extent, was indebted for his position. (9)

Later all the members of Abdul-Baha's family, his daughters, his descendants, his sons-in-law, the brothers and sisters of Shoghi Effendi, and last of all his own parents were excommunicated. (10)

Riyadh Rabbani, a younger brother of the Guardian, has stated (11) that he for years had assisted Shoghi Effendi in his work. Then when Shoghi excommunicated his parents he called upon Riyadh to make a choice between him and his parents. Riyadh decided to side with his parents" whereupon he was rejected by his brother. It seems that Shoghi Effendi's family accepted this severe discipline without resistance, for to whom could they appeal for redress?

4-Shoghi Effendi usurps the custodianship from Mirza Muhammad Ali

Several quarrels, however, took place at the center of the Cause, one of which was over the custodianship of

the shrine of Baha'u'llah in Akka. While 'Abdu'l Baha lived, he in accordance with Muslim law as eldest son had the responsibility for his father's grave. When he died the custodianship should have gone according to law to Baha'u'llah's eldest surviving son Mirza Muhammad Ali. Not' long after his accession to the Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi ordered the caretaker of the shrine to refuse entrance to certain people. Then the keys were taken from the caretaker by someone, and handed to the legal custodian Mirza Muhammad Ali, and neither the American Baha'is who intervened nor the British High Commissioner were able to dispossess Mirza Muhammad Ali of his rights. Shoghi Effendi could not go to court over this, for the Will of his grandfather which appointed him Guardian had not been probated, Finally, Shoghi Effendi approached the British District Commissioner, and he sent his Arab assistant who was on friendly terms with both parties to arrange a settlement out of court. This was done, the keys were turned over to Shoghi Effendi, and Muhammad Ali and his partisans were allowed free access to the tomb of Baha'u'llah, without let or hindrance. (12)

5-The Daughter of Mirza Badiullah denied entry into the Tomb

Many years later in 1952 the daughter of Mirza Badi'u'llah, Mrs. Qamar Bahai, went to Akka accompanied by a friend, and attempted to visit the tomb of her grandfather Baha'u'llah the caretaker employed by Shoghi Effendi was rude to them, and denied them entrance to the shrine. Whereupon Mrs. Bahai brought an action in the Israeli District Court in Haifa against Shoghi Effendi, to show cause why she was denied access to the tomb of her grandfather. She appeared in court in person accompanied by her counsel. Shoghi Effendi did not appear, but was represented by his counsel and two American Baha'is. The President of the Court, in an effort to settle the matter out of court, took Mrs. Bahai into his office and asked her if she would meet Shoghi Effendi for an amicable settlement, and she agreed. But to the great surprise of the President of the Court, the two American Baha'is rejected the proposal. Finally, the matter was referred to the Minister for Religious Affairs in the Israeli Government, who called in the parties separately, and worked out a settlement, whereby free access to the shrine, without let or hindrance, was granted to all members of the family of Baha'u'llah, and to this both parties subscribed. (13)

6-The house of Mirza Muhammad Ali usurped by Shoghi Effendi

During the lifetime of Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l Baha and his family had resided in the town of Akka, while his brothers and their families had lived in the Bahji Palace several miles from Akka near their father. After the death of Baha'u'llah they continued to live there, owning undivided shares in the property, but without the income, which 'Abdu'l Baha received, they were unable to keep this large property in good repair. When Shoghi Effendi became the head of the Baha'i Cause, he naturally felt it was important for him to control all the sacred sites. He, therefore, proposed to Mirza Muhammad Ali that he and the others move out of the Palace to nearby buildings that Shoghi might repair the Palace, and this was done. When they moved out they took with them the household equipment that they had been using, and Shoghi Effendi replaced this. (14) Thus the Palace also became a place of pilgrimage for Baha'is.

7-Shoghi Effendi was interested more in novels

Simple events and incidents are distorted and misrepresented in the furtherance of private ends and personal ambitions. The cases treated in these pages [of God Passes By] are glaring examples of misrepresentations of historical facts." It was said that. Shoghi Efendi when a student in Beirut was very fond of reading novels, and God Passes By should be considered an historical novel rather than authentic history.

In reading this book one is disappointed to find that the guardian of a Cause which has professed allegiance

to peace and 1ove and world-brotherhood and absence of any sort of prejudice should have expressed such bitterness toward many of the members of his own family. He refers (15) to Baha'u'llah's second son Mirza Muhammad Ali as "the Prime Mover of sedition," he speaks of the third and fourth sons as "the vacillating Mirza Ziya'u'llah and the treacherous Mirza Badi'u'llah," (16) and he calls the sons-in-law of Baha'u'llah "infamous" and "crafty."

8-Shoghi Effendi excommunicates his brother in law (Sayed Ali Nayyar Afnan)

In his Messages also the Guardian sometimes condemned with great severity those who differed with him. The cable from Shoghi Efendi addressed to the Baha'is of the United States, which was printed in Baha'i News, No. 256, and dated April 15, 1952, a part of which will be quoted below, is a sample of his style. In this Message the Guardian announced the death in Haifa of Sayyid Ali Nayyir Afnan, a grandson of Baha'u'llah, and husband of Shoghi's eldest sister Ruhangez. It is said that Sayyid Ali "had a charming personality," and associated with, and befriended, men of all walks of life." He expressed himself strongly as being opposed to the Guardian's policy of rejecting anyone who did not fully agree with him, and as result he was himself excommunicated (Azal's Notes, p. 1107) The 300-word cable begins thus: (17)

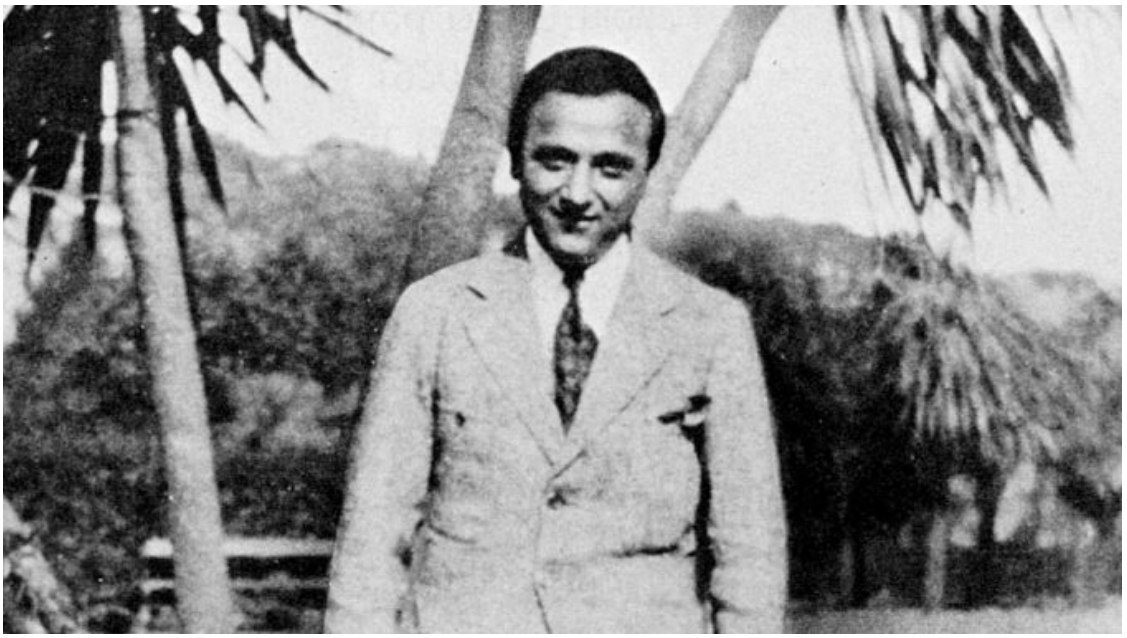
God's Avenging Wrath

"Inform National Assemblies (that) God's avenging wrath…. (has) now struck down….Sayyid Ali Nayer Afnan, pivot (of) Machinations, connecting link (between) old (and) new Covenant-breakers. "This alone (will) reveal extent (of) havoc wreaked (by) this virus (of) violation- injected, fostered over two decades (in) Abdul Baha's family….(who) was repeatedly denounced by Center (of the) Covenant (as) his chief enemy……"

FOOTNOTES:-

1. Aqdas, pp. 50, 51.
2. Azal's Notes, p. 316.
3. Ibid., pp. 50, 51.
4. Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l Baha, Lancaster, Penna., p. 15.
5. Azal's Notes, p. 52.
6. Azal's Notes, p. 46
7. Baha'i World 1956-1928, Vol. II, p. 85.
8. Azal's Notes, p. 47.
9. Ibid., pp. 440-442.
10. Ibid., pp. 53, 98, 340, 441-443, 680. One well acquainted with the Situation has stated that the chief cause of these unhappy family Divisions were "the love of money."
11. Ibid., p. 680.
12. Azal's notes, pp. 91, 92, God Passes By, p. 356
13. Azal's Notes, pp. 92, 93.
14. Azal's notes, pp. 341, 342, God Passes By, p. 356 .
15. God Passes By, p. 247.
16. Mirza Badi'u'llah died in Haifa on November 12, 1950, aged 82.
17. See Appendix II, #71.

Shoghi Effendi and Grandsons of ‘Abdu’l Baha



Respect of Shoghi Effendi towards children of ‘Abdu’l Baha

Here we would like to bring the facts about Shoghi Effendi’s cruelty towards the Holy family of ‘Abdu’l Baha, as he become Guardian of faith by will and testaments of ‘Abdu’l Baha, he turned dictator and started ex-communicating the holy family of Baha’u’llah, the grand children who served the faith in Europe and America. Readers might be wondering why he has ex-communicated the entire grandchildren of ‘Abdu’l Baha, what was that heinous crime which they committed, that Guardian has to take such drastic step to ex-communicate them, not only this even he ordered that if someone asked about their well-being will also come under wrath of Guardian. First let us list the Noble family members of and Grand Children of ‘Abdu’l Baha.

‘Abdu’l Baha had four Daughters

1. Ziayyeh Khanum
2. Touba Khanum
3. Rouha Khanum
4. Monavar Khanum

1. Ziayyeh Khanum, married to Mirza Hadi Afnan
   Children from this marriage:

- Shoghi Effendi Rabbani
- Ruh-Anghiz Khanum
- Mehr-Anghiz Khanum
- Hussain Effendi Rabbani
- Riaz Effendi Rabbani

1. Touba Khanum Married Mirza Mohsen Afnan
   Children from this marriage:

- Ruhi Effendi Afnan

- Soroya Khanum
- Soheil Effendi Afnan
- Foad Effendi Afnan

1. Rouha Khanum, married to Mirza Jalal Effendi Shahid
   Children from this marriage:

- Maryam Khanum
- Munib Effendi
- Zahra Khanum
- Hassan Effendi.

1. Munavvar Khanum married to Ahmad Effendi Yazdi.

No Issue.

Direct Excommunication

- Ruhi Effendi Afnan: Grandson of 'Abdu'l Baha
- Zahra Khanum: Granddaughter of 'Abdu'l Baha and wife of Ruhi
- Soraya Khanum: Granddaughter of 'Abdu'l Baha and wife of Feyzi Effendi
- Foad Effendi Afnan: Grandson of 'Abdu'l Baha
- Mehr Angiz: Granddaughter of 'Abdu'l Baha and Sister of Shoghi
- Feyzi Effendi: Grandson of Baha'u'llah
- Touba Khanum: second daughter of 'Abdu'l Baha
- Rouha Khanum: Third daughter of 'Abdu'l Baha
- Mirza Jalal Shahid: Husband of Rouha Khanum
- Furughiya Khanum: Daughter of Baha'u'llah
- Agha Sayyed Ali Afnan: Husband of Furghiya Kahnum

Let us examine the cause and effects of these excommunications from the Book of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab "'ABDU'L BAHA'S GRANDSONS"

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab was confident secretary of 'Abdu'l Baha for many years he was well versed in Baha'i teachings and trusted lieutenant, he was sent to teach and propagate faith to America, there are numerous tablets of 'Abdu'l Baha in respect of Mira Ahmed Sohrab after the sad demise of 'Abdu'l Baha when Shoghi took the charge of Baha'i administration he quickly realize popularity and influence of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, he side-lined him, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab wrote many books for faith, when he saw Shoghi is excommunicating the entire family of 'Abdu'l Baha he wrote a Book "**'Abdu'l Baha's Grandsons**" in which he raised his voice for the oppressed souls of 'Abdu'l Baha's Grandsons.

Page 24-26

The year of Disgrace

The law of excommunication puts an absolute ban on those who are *expelled from the Faith*. *The families of these persons* and their *fellow*-believers must leave the ostracized individuals alone. They must neither communicate nor associate with them. They must break all ties of friendship and of humanity even; for, if

they deviate one hair's breath from this law, they *themselves* fall into the same ditch.

Thus, as time goes on, the numbers of the excommunicated increases;

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

For a few are generally to be found, here and there, who are willing to risk ease and safety in order to follow their generous impulses. Such evidently was the case in the instance of Touba Khanum; it probably is the case in the instance of Rouha Khanum. However, in the instance of Ziayyeh Khanum, the Guardian cables that his *parents strongly condemn Mehr-Angiz's action. Thus, Shoghi* Effendi's father and mother have been forced to publicly denounce and repudiate their own daughter. Hereafter, they must be as strangers to her. They can never approach her in her hours of trouble or illness. They will never hold their grandchildren in their arms. Such is the Baha'i Cause in this year of disgrace — 1942.

A Fact Beyond Realization

I intend to take up the matter, treating it in connection with historical data and in the light of reason; and, in order to simplify the subject as far as possible, I will centre my thoughts on the personality of Ruhi Effendi Afnan. His excommunication and the reasons given for it tell the story of all *the rest*.

Ruhi Effendi Afnan has twice visited the United States; he has lectured before numerous Baha'i gatherings and outside groups; his articles on the Baha'i Cause are published in Baha'i publications and the records of his loyal services to the Guardian and the Baha'i organization are spread on the pages *of Baha'i News*. Knowing full well that he has not deserved the treatment accorded him at the hands of his cousin, Shoghi Effendi, I am *taking it upon* myself *to* vindicate him, as far as I am able.

Having experienced excommunication together with the ostracism of all those who are associated with me, I naturally sympathize with other excommunicated persons. However, this is not the reason that impels me to raise a voice of protest at this juncture.

During eight years, I was fed, clothed and educated by 'Abdu'l Baha. Throughout that time, the Master's daughters were most gracious to me and I carry in my memory lively tokens of their kindness. I associated most intimately with their children, and vividly remember the ardent respect of these young ones for their grandfather, and their devotion to him. I hold each and all of them in high regard.

I never objected to my own excommunication, nor did I take it at all s*eriously; but* the excommunication of the very family *of* 'Abdu'l Baha has shaken my being to its foundations. I am amazed and indignant. I am outraged and horror-stricken. The fact that Shoghi Effendi has dared to expel from his own household these souls, in whose bodies run the blood and life of 'Abdu'l Baha, is beyond realization. The reasons given for their

Excommunication are childish to the extreme, having nothing to do with their faith and love for the Baha'i Cause.

In the writing of this book, I have not had the opportunity of consulting with any of the members of 'Abdu'l Baha's family. It is certain that none of them would *consult* with me. Thus, I have asked permission of no one, and am alone responsible for every word appearing here. My *own* conscience is my sole guide.

Another reason for my taking up the pen in this regard is that a number of Baha'is have written to me on this subject. To put it very mildly, they are disillusioned, shocked and confused. They cannot square the actions of the Guardian with his role in life. They are wondering what *precipice is around the corner; toward what*

swamp *of* despair the Baha'i Cause is being driven. They are anxiously asking if there may possibly be a modern rational explanation for these medieval and irrational procedures.

We will therefore face the issue: and, as a first step, will examine the Bulls of Excommunication as presented in the up-to-date guise *of the* cablegram.

Text of *Cablegrams* (Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

Ruhi's sister married covenant-breaker Feyzi, whose mother joined and supported arch-enemy Muhammad Ali and whose father 'Abdu'l Baha denounced openly and repeatedly as His deadly enemy. Ruhi's family concurred, inform all believers (that) all manner (of) communication (with) excommunicated family (is) forbidden.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

(Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

(The) flagrant disloyalty (of) Ruhi's family compels me (to) disclose information so long (and) patiently withheld (from) American believers concerning his failure (to) obtain my approval (of) his second visit (to) America. His Subsequent conduct regarding *his marriage* which I refrained from revealing (to) anyone except your Assembly, as well as Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge, should now be *made kn*own (to) believers. Confident *(of)* Unshakable steadfastness (of) exemplary American Baha'i Community-

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

Answer sent on November 17th by the National Spiritual Assembly:—

Informing friends (of your) message (about) Ruhi's family. Assure complete obedience protection unity (of) sacred Faith.

(Cablegram received on November 21, 1941)

My confidence (in) immovable steadfastness (and) unstinted loyalty (of) American believers (is) reinforced.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani. —*Baha'i News;* December, 1941, No 149, pp. 1-2

From Page 11

PROTEST

Against the Excommunication of Members of Baha'u'llah's Family

signed by Leaders of Religion and Educators

May 1942

In these days when the principles of humanity are threatened on all sides, there is urgent need for men and women of good faith and purpose to band together for the upholding of the common rights of man, within their own communities and religions and within the communities and religions of others.

It is with this thought in mind that the undersigned consider conditions within a minority group, namely the Baha'i Cause, and make passionate protest against the recent excommunication by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Cause, of certain members of Baha'u'llah's family. Excommunication, as we take it, is an order for severance of ties between the excommunicated and their fellow-members in Faith. It is a un-

Christ-like act which, although practiced in medieval ages by religious authorities, is now totally condemned by enlightened persons of every rank and profession.

Therefore, we go on record, at this hour when the Four Freedoms enunciated by the President of the United States are ringing around the earth, endorsing whole-heartedly and without qualifications whatsoever a sentence from Mr Roosevelt's historic speech before Congress, delivered in January 1941:—

"The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world."

On the basis of this principle we insist that, in the New World Order which all of us picture and strive for, the irreligious practice of excommunication be set aside forever and replaced by the practice of Love and Tolerance as set forth throughout the ages by Christ and the great company of prophets, seers and spiritual teachers.

We urge men and women of all Faiths to consistently oppose, and to refuse to recognize, any and all exclusion acts within their religion, and under all circumstances to keep open the doors of their temples and hearts to their fellow-believers and to their fellows of every race, creed and colour.

Signed by:

Mr. David P. Berenberg, Author: *A Worker's World;* Educator,Lecturer Kedarnath DasGupta, Author: *Essence of Religions* and Founder of

World Fellowship of Faiths Dr. Georgia Dunn, Professor of Psychology, Hunter College, NewYork

Mr. William Floyd, Editor: *Arbitrator;* Author, Educator Archbishop William H. Francis of the Old Catholic Church Miss Frances Grant, President of Pan-American Women Association, New *York*

Mr. Jacob Greenwald, Counsellor-at-Law, New York Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Minister of Community Church, New York Mr. Gordon S. P. Kleeberg, Counsellor-at-Law, New York Commander R. E. Lambert, U. S. N. R.; Editor: *Sourcebook* Rev. Leon Rosser Land, Minister of Bronx Free Fellowship, NewYork
Dr. John Rowland Lathrop, Minister of Church of the Saviour,

Brooklyn, *New* York Mr. William Pickens, Director of Branches, National Association

for the Advancement of Colored People, Washington, D. C. Dr. Haridas T- Muzumdar, Author: *The United Nations of the World;* Lecturer, Sociologist

Mr. John J. O'Neill, *Science Editor, New York Herald-Tribune R*ev. A. J. Muste, Secretary, The Fellowship of Reconciliation, NewYork

The Key. Dr. Charles Francis Potter, Author; *The Story of Religion;*

Founder and Leader of The First Humanist Society of New York Miss Lisa Sergio, Radio Commentator

Dr. Krishnalal Shridharani, Author: *My India,* A/y *America;* Lecturer Dr. Anup Singh, Editor: *India To~Day;* Author: *Nehru, the Rising Star of India*

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton, N. Y.
Dr. Eliot White, Clergyman, Writer, Lecturer

PROTEST Comment and Some Notable Letters

In the Old World, we were not our brother's keeper; but were of the cautious *type, looking for our own* interests and letting ethers shift for themselves. In the New World that is to be, we shall recognize the fact that all of us are part of the human organism and will boldly apply ourselves Io the task of keeping that

organism in good shape. The averted eyes, the careful picking of one's way on the other side of the road will no longer be the acceptable attitude; but the straight look and the helping hand will be the characteristic of a new citizenry, *everywhere in the world.*

Of such an order are the distinguished educators who have condemned the action of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Baha'i Cause, taken against several members of Baha'u'llah's family. Excommunication, to their minds, has no place in modem society; intolerance, exclusion and cruelty has no place in any society, and so they have condemned this deed and gone on record in a *Protest* that wil make a landmark in religious history. The Protestant Minister, the Catholic Bishop, the Jewish Rabbi, the Hindu, the Sikh have arisen together to protect the Baha'i—their brother before God and man. So have the boundary lines grown thin under the penetrating warmth of the Religion of Love.

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton New York, in a letter dated March 25, 1942 writes to us that their Young Men's Class studied Baha'ism the previous week and is to consider Shoghi Effendi's excommunications the following Sunday. Dr. Stockdale states that he is ready to do anything "to help banish this ancient barbarism of excommunication from off this earth" and has actually communicated directly with the Guardian on this subject. He encloses a copy of his letter, which w£ herewith reproduce:—

CHIRM OF CHH1ST IN AMERICA

Melhodiet Branch George Maychin Stockdale, Minister

Clinton, New York, March 25, 1942.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Baha'i Cause, Persian Colony, Haifa, Palestine. Dear Guardian of the Baha'i Cause,

Your Chris like Grandfather, Abdul Bah a, when asked on one occasion, "What is a Baha'i?" replied,

"TO BE A BAHA'I SIMPLY MEANS TO LOVE ALL THE WORLD: TO LOVE HUMANITY AND TRY TO SERVE IT; TO WORK FOR UNIVERSAL PEACE AND UNIVERSAL BROTHER. HOOD."

(J. E. Easlemont, "Baha'u'llah and the New Era," page 70.)

I would like to make the above my own definition of what it is to be a Christian. On this definition the Hindu Gandhi and the Buddhist Das Gupta are both Christians and Baha'is, as well as true Hindus and Buddhists respectively. Some of my Baha'i friends do me more honour than I deserve by telling me that I am a Baha'i, although I am just trying to be a Christian.

If we agree on the above, and I hope we do, it is the more amazing to gel word of what are called, and seem to be, your excommunications of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, your* cousin; his wife; your sister and *others*.

What troubles me, my dear Sir, is the method employed. If we love all humans, and the Love of God cannot dwell in us unless we do, how can we use any other than Love and Persuasion as our means of seeking change of mind and heart in those we deem wrong? Can excommunication be a method of Love?

Now far be it from us to prematurely make up our minds in this controversy. We would hear your side. Sir. Yet we assure you that even if you should submit proof positive of the commission of the more heinous crimes by any or all of the excommunicated, (which I am sure you wouldn't,) still would we say that the WAY of LOVE demands we retain community with the vilest of sinners. THEY NEED LOVE EVEN MORE THAN NINETY and NINE SPIRITUALLY TRANSFORMED SOULS, in whom GOD (LOVE) DWELLS. That seems dear to me from both the teachings of Christ and of Baha'u'llah, interpreted too, by Paul and 'Abdu'l Baha

respectively.

It troubles me too that it is reported that you are not too sure amid this world madness just what loyalty we owe to God and what to the state. We are blessed beyond many here in America, as in Britain, in that the Draft Law here specifically makes room for us pacifists, who could not disobey God at the command of man, no matter what the consequences. We know you have the cares of a world gone mad in suicidal slaughter on your mind and heart. Yet it would be heartening to have from you a word, clear as crystal, that Baha'ism officially "although making no attempt to bind the consciences of its individual members, will NOT OFFICIALLY ENDORSE, SUPPORT OR PAR-T1CIPATE IN WAR." I have slipped into the exact words of our Methodist Branch of the Christian Church, with which I agree one hundred per cent.

Yours, strong in the Faith that LOVE (GOD) alone can win,

(Signed) George May chin Stock dale

Shoghi Effendi has not replied to any of these protests.

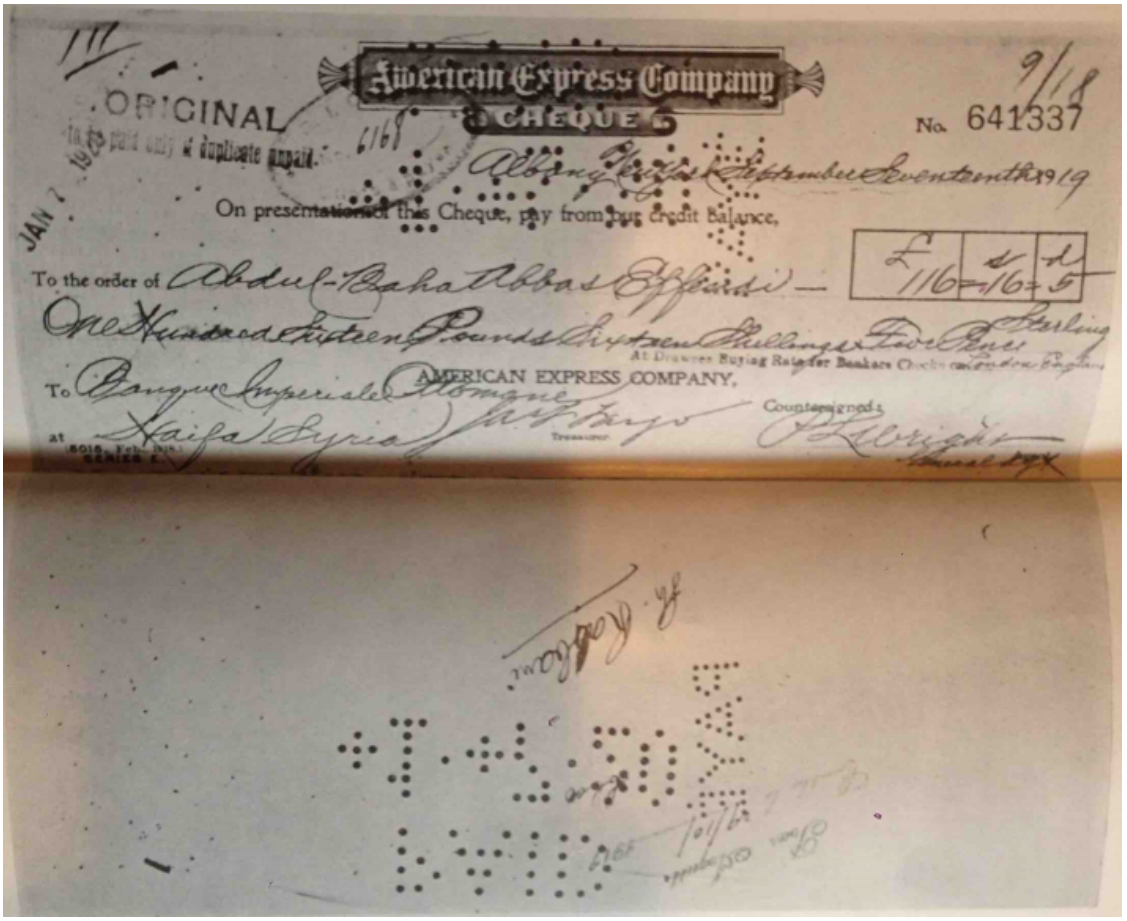
SCAM ALERT: Shoghi Effendi Charity Fraud

Read on to find out how Shoghi Effendi converted charity funds to his personal use.

As narrated by our first inspiration, Lady Ruth White in her book, The Baha'i Religion and its Enemy The Baha'i Organization – "In the Autumn of 1919 I sent to Abdul Baha an American Express Company check of Five hundred dollars and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing.

About four month after we arrived in Haifa as the guests of Abdu'l Baha. On the day before departure I asked Abdu'l Baha if he had received the check. Without a moment's hesitation and very emphatically he said that he had not received it. He repeated this a number of times, and seemed indignant that it had not been turned over to him.

I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdu'l Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter. He returned and said there were no record of the check. When I returned to America I asked the American Express Company to look up the receipt of the check I had sent through their office, and on the back of it was the signature of the person who had received the cash. This person was Shoghi Rabbani [i.e. Shoghi Effendi].



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For immediately after cashing the check he departed for Oxford, this despite the fact that Abdu'l Baha did not wish him to go. Some may naturally ask: How could Shoghi Effendi have cashed the check unless he had authority to do so. This he may have had. Yet, the fact remain that the proceeds were never turned over to Abdu'l Baha. My readers may, therefore, draw their own conclusions."

Do you really think Abdu'l Baha made a mistake in appointing Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the faith? Certainly not, rather His Will and Testament was tempered and Shoghi was never appointed as the Guardian of the faith.

Shoghi Effendi going against the wish of Abdul Baha

DID YOU KNOW?

In spite of failing in his college course at the age of twenty-four, Shoghi Effendi wanted to go to the Oxford University. And that too despite the objections made by the Master. Let us read what Lady Ruth White has brought in her book regarding this event.

"I also wish to give a few highlights on Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of Abdul Baha, who is now his alleged successor. He had failed in his college course at the age of twenty-four, and he wished to go to Oxford University, in the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of Abdu'l Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with Abdul Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life, than any amount of academic training could possibly be. For these last two years were filled with intense activities, and spiritual confirmations, as it was just after the first world war, and the war had made people hungry for spiritual enlightenment. As a result, there flocked to the home of Abdul Baha a steady stream of pilgrims from all over the earth – the poor, the wealthy, the distinguished, and frightened refugees. They came by camel, train, auto, boat, and on foot to imbibe the spiritual wisdom of Abdul Baha, and each day there dined at his table about forty pilgrims. This personal contact which we were privileged to have was of tremendous importance, not only because of what he said, but because of the emanation of his spirit, which transported those who were receptive into kingdoms of enlightenment and happiness. Yet Shoghi Effendi chose to be away during the last two years of Abdul Baha's life, and did not return for a full month after he had passed from this world.

Another significant fact to which I wish to call attention is this: If Abdul Baha had had any secret intention of appointing Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Bahai Cause, it does not seem plausible that he would have excluded him from the entourage that accompanied him on his trip through Europe and America during 1912. Shoghi Effendi at that time was eighteen years of age and spoke and wrote English, Persian and Arabic; yet he was not included in this trip. Even after Abdul Baha returned to Palestine, instead of choosing Shoghi Effendi as his secretary, he chose Ahmad Sohrab, who had accompanied him to Europe and America, and who continued as his secretary for five succeeding years."

(Reference: Ruth White, Abdu'l Baha's Questioned Will and Testament, p 29)

SHOGHI EFFENDI: LIFE HISTORY

Birth, early life and education: Shoghi Rabbani (Effendi) was born in Akká on the 1st of March 1897. He was a descendent of the Báb through his father, Mírzá Hádí Shírází, and of Baha'u'llah through his mother, Ziyá'iyyih Khánum, who was the eldest daughter of Abdu'l-Bahá.

He was not particularly known to be close to his grandfather Abdul Baha in terms of character and behaviour. Not being interested in spiritual activities, he hardly, if ever, accompanied Abdul Baha in his religious activities.

For education, Shoghi was sent to The Oxford University in England and during the course of his studies he was known to show lacklustre interest in the curriculum. On the other hand, he gained a particular notoriety for enjoying the high life. Noting his particular disinterest in in his very expensive education left many perplexed. When he was asked for the reason behind his lack of motivation he replied- "People study to earn their bread. Why should one study while he already has his bread ready" (he expected to be anointed as the care taker of Baha'i religion)

Marriage: Shoghi's marriage was fixed with his cousin Maryam, the daughter of Abdul Baha's son-in-law Mirza Jalal Shahid. However, developing cold feet Shoghi backed out and married Mary Maxwell.

His wife was the daughter of May Ellis Maxwell nee May Ellis Bolles. Mary never accepted the Last name of Shoghi Effendi till the very end maintained the Maxwell last name. She was later given the title of Ruhiyyih Khanum and Amatul Baha to make her persona more acceptable to the Bahai communities in Asia and Africa.

Conversion of Funds for Private Use

Ruth White: The subject converted funds to his own use. The Bahai religion and its Enemy the Bahai Organization by Ruth White, the Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont 1929.

Ruth White writes: "In the Autumn of 1919 I sent to Abdul Baha [i.e. Sir Abbas Effendi] an American Express Company check of Five hundred dollars and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing.

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I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdul Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter. He returned and said there was no record of the check. When I returned to America, I asked the American Express Company to look up the receipt of the check I had sent through their office, and on the back of it was the signature of the person who had received the cash. This person was Shoghi Rabbani [i.e. Shoghi Effendi].

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Shoghi Effendi: A world class philanderer

Subhi's Payam-i Padar, PP. 143-146: has noted Shoghi Effendi to be a frequenter of men of magnificent physique and virility, a pervert who craved to be consorted with, a hermaphrodite requiring surgical operation to determine his sex.

Subhi had been an eyewitness on several counts to acts challenging common decency and on one particular occasion he states to have been challenged by the Shoghi Effendi to put his manhood to the test.

"Shoghi Effendi was possessed of peculiar nature and habit which cannot be properly described; his manly disposition was inconsiderable; he was continually desirous of cultivating friendship, and associations, with robust men and youth!"

"One night I was with him (meaning Shoghi) and Doctor Zia Baghdadi who was the son of a famous Baha'i who practiced medicine in America and had come to visit Abdu'l-Baha in Haifa. We were hanging around in Acre and were fooling about humorously like teenagers. While we were conversing, I left the room to attend to some matters and and when I returned, I observed that Doctor Zia had committed an unrighteous act… I was outraged and said: Doctor! What is this deed that you are doing?! Shoghi turned to me and said: "If you have manhood too then show it." I saw many similar acts and heard [similar] words from him many times and perceived that he must be lacking something."

Shoghi Effendi may be categorized "in the category of "hermaphrodites" in whom opposite qualities are embodied…" requiring surgical operation for adjustment.

Shoghi Effendi has "no feeling, attachment or devotion" for father, brother, sister, mother or friend. He issues orders which no sane man would give."

The Kashful-Hiyal (the Uncovering of Deceptions) by Abdul Husayn Ayati nicknamed Avarih, one-time chief Bahai missionary says: "it is not possible to categorize him as either male or female! Neither possessing feminine kindness and charm nor having mannish wisdom and sobriety! There are attachments in these kinds of people which is hard to find out. I am not aware if you have heard of that physicians lays down a man and by some medical treatment changes him to a female and vice versa. … I wish Shoghi had visited a physician in his youth and could be purified! That's why you don't see him having any attachment to his father or grief of his siblings; neither remembering his mother's pains to raise him nor recognizing his true friends!

He commands things that are not wise, and excuses that are far from rational. All this because of the same root problem. (Ref-Avarih's Kashf-al-Hiyal, Vol. II, 2nd impression, PP. 84-85 and P. 166; Vol., III 3rd impression, PP. 212-213)

"The command of Allah shall be executed" (a quote from Quran), forty days after Abdul' baha died and the customary mourning period ended the days of joy began for Shoghi. Now anointed as the "Guardian" of the faith and with vast sums of money at his disposal happy times had arrived for Shoghi!

Shoghi, oh you don't know who Shoghi was!

Hundreds of students studying in Beirut with Shoghi were witness to the fact that he had no inclination towards studies and his true passion lied in mollycoddling pretty boys and girls. Shoghi was known to spend time getting cozy with boys in dark corners of the dance floor. Ultimately, he failed in his studies and got infected with scabies which appeared on his hands forcing him to wear Chamois leather gloves and take medical treatment.

Shoghi and with that you knew who Shoghi was!

The guy who failed to get a diploma in Oxford as well as Beirut! The same Shoghi who when questioned by his classmate "why don't you pay attention to your studies?" replied: "what is studying all about? To find a piece of bread and mine is already prepared".

And the same Shoghi who during his first and last speech in London, for an audience of 16, Miss Rosenberg stood up and said: beloved Shoghi, sit down! People have no desire to listen to you and they have fallen asleep!" This 70-year-old lady then proceeded to the lectern and spoke". (Kashful Hiyal Vol 2 page 84-85 second edition)

Once someone saw Shoghi Effendi entering a private shower with the son of Mirza Baqir Shirazi, at the morning call to prayer (Azan) and followed them. There he witnessed what is difficult to describe. Upon confronting Shoghi he said: "The sense (eye) makes errors in sensing (seeing) and (what)you saw was an error"

The making of Shoghi Effendi

It was after the death of Abdul Baha, that his Will was read initially only to few 'old and recognised Baha'is'. Later it was made public after a few years. In the alleged Will of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi was anointed as the Guardian of the cause. The announcement of Shoghi as the Guardian came as a shock to many Baha'is who doubted the veracity and authenticity of his appointment. This was because Abdul Baha never introduced Shoghi as his successor during his lifetime.

However, nobody dared to question the authenticity of the alleged Will, lest they be excommunicated, except for Lady Ruth White. Ruth White made exhaustive inquiries to ascertain the authenticity of the alleged Will, including getting its handwriting analysed by the foremost expert in forensics Dr. C.A Mitchell, who declared the document to be a forgery.

Pleading an alleged inability to administer the duties of his office and to recover from the shock caused by the death of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi withdrew albeit temporarily from his responsibilities as a guardian and retired into solitude for an expensive swiss vacation for 8 months (using Baha'i funds) leaving the guardianship of Baha'i affairs in the hands of a few elder members of Abdul Baha's family, notionally naming with Baha'u'llah's daughter, the supreme leaf, as a titular head.

While Shoghi was away from public glare, grounds were being prepared for all Baha'is to accept him as the Guardian of the faith without question. Upon Shoghis return to Haifa, he was declared publicly as the Guardian of the faith. He then took over the reins of the Baha'i administration, and demanded ready and explicit obedience from the servants of God, in default of which any servant of god was liable to excommunication or to summary expulsion from the faith under the flimsy pretext of disobedience. Shoghi Effendi brooked interference. His decisions were absolute and final and his words authoritative.

As the divinely-ordained guardian all faithful were decreed to obey him. Shoghi began to organise the religion into a controlled administration in order to have a stronger grip over the Baha'is under his command. He decreed the establishment of spiritual assemblies who in turn worked for him. All activities

undertaken by these assemblies worldwide were reported to Shoghi Effendi. At the same time, orders were dictated to Bahais by Shoghi via the same channel of assemblies.

His Achievements of excommunicating

After taking the post of guardianship, Shoghi soon began to misuse his power as the guardian of the faith. He began to excommunicate all those from his family who raised any form of objection or dissent against him. Shoghi systematically under various flimsy pretexts managed to excommunicate the entire family of Abdul Baha.

These included his sisters, brothers and cousins. He excommunicated Ruhi Effendi for travelling to America for the purpose of preaching, without seeking his permission. All of this shameless display of oppression was to ensure loyalty by fear. Since the holy family of Abdul Baha knew the fact that Shoghi was far removed from religion of Abdul Baha Shoghi found it imperative to remove them from the faith in order to clear all obstacles to his unchecked power.

The Death of Shoghi Effendi – The end of Guardianship

As Shoghi was known as the mystery of God, even his death remains a mystery till date. Although there is a good amount of circumstantial evidence to show that his sudden death was in fact a murder and he was poisoned.

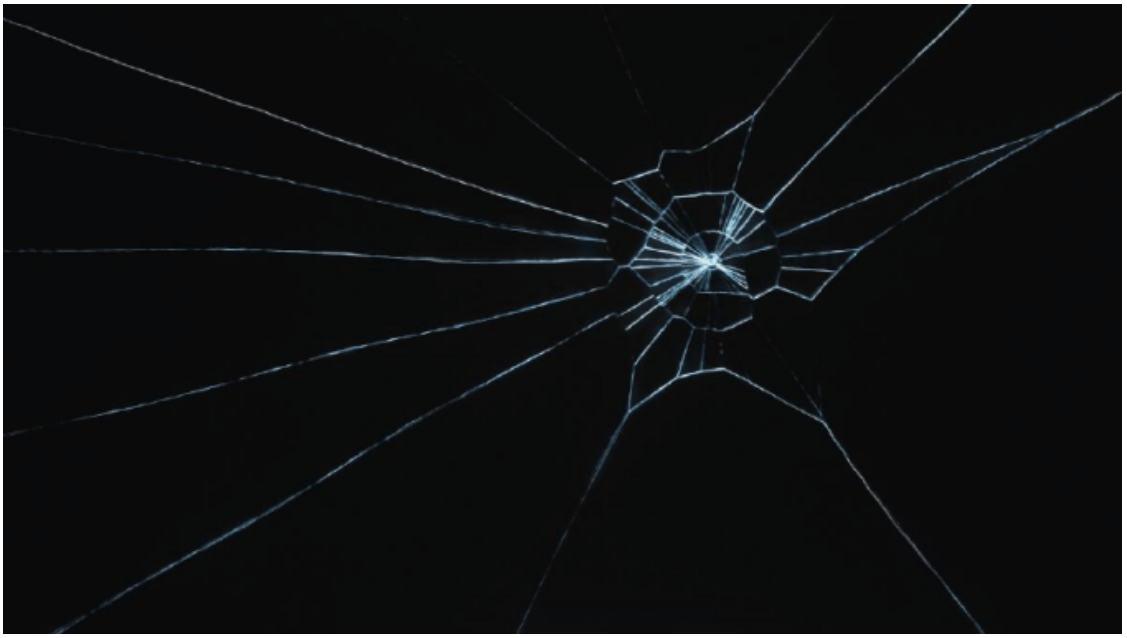
In the beginning of the year 1957 Shoghi Effendis health was deteriorating and on the advice of his doctors and his wife he agreed to go for medical treatment to England. Upon reaching London on 20th October 1957 they checked into a hotel rather than one of the many welcoming homes of the Bahais there. During this period of their stay in this hotel in London, it was reported that Shoghi effendi was diagnosed with Influenza.

At the time the plan for the “10 years crusade” was being drawn with the consultation of John Ferraby (who was a ‘hand of the cause of God’ and the secretary of the NSA of England) and Hasan Balyuzi Afnan (who was a member of the NSA of England). At that moment the succession plan to Shoghi was not in place and it was unclear as to who will head the faith after him. Mary Maxwell who was present there and was aware of this fact kept tab on the deteriorating health of Shoghi Effendi. She kept asking him if there was any pain in his body to which Shoghi replied in the negative. He kept saying that only his finger pained and he felt tired.

Mary Maxwell then proceeded to administer an unprescribed and undescribed medicine to him without the approval of his physician. That was the same night Shoghi suddenly died. Mary Maxwell then proceeded to cable the bahais worldwide lying to them that the guardian is very sick when infact she was the one who had already bumped him off. He was later buried at a cemetery in London.

Shoghi died childless and none from the Aghsan could ever succeed him. A philanderer with taste in men, who lived a lavish lifestyle at the cost of the money donated by the poor bahais for his “cause”, who disobeyed the teachings of his grandfather finally perished and is now resting in a poorly visited cemetery in London far-far away from the Holy Land.

Shoghi Effendi – The So-Called “GUARDIAN” Who Betrayed The Cause



History calls him the Guardian of the Baha’i Faith. Yet, when one looks beyond the titles and carefully woven narratives, a far darker truth emerges. What kind of “Guardian” celebrates persecution, excommunicates his own family, and replaces humility with hierarchy? What kind of leadership stands in the name of unity, yet divides and destroys?

A Guardian Rejoicing in Tragedy

In The Messiah of Shiraz (Denis MacEoin, p. 528), we find chilling evidence of how Shoghi Effendi reacted to the martyrdom of innocent Baha’is in Iran. Instead of mourning, he celebrated the global attention it brought to the Faith. Writing to the American Baha’is in August 1955, Shoghi stated:

“Seldom, if at any time since its inception, has such a widespread publicity been accorded the infant Faith of God, now at long last emerging from an obscurity which has so long and so grievously oppressed it…

”To him, the shedding of Baha’i blood was publicity. The suffering of believers became a marketing opportunity. Even worse, he later directed that funds be used to hire “an expert publicity agent.” Was this the spirit of Baha’u’llah’s teachings — to find advantage in the suffering of others?

A Guardian Who Banished His Own Blood

The so-called Guardian excommunicated nearly every close relative of Baha’u’llah and Abdu’l Baha — including his own parents and the granddaughters of Abdu’l Baha. Among those cast out were Ruhi Effendi Afnan, Mehr-Angiz (Shoghi’s own sister), and even Lady Munira, the beloved wife of Abdu’l Baha.

No tyrant in history was harsher toward his own kin. How could the grandson of the Master, who embodied love and service, become a source of pain and humiliation for those who carried the same sacred lineage?

A Greedy Guardian in the Age of Gold

Under Abdu’l Baha, generosity meant humility. He refused even the $18,000 offered by American Baha’is for his travels, returning it with instructions to “give it to the poor.” (Zimmer, A Fraudulent Testament).

But under Shoghi Effendi, money became the Faith's new idol. Fundraising replaced service, bureaucracy replaced love, and temples of stone replaced temples of the heart. The shift was clear: the Cause became a corporate enterprise, and the faithful became financiers of an administration that fed itself.

A Guardian of Arrogance, Not of Grace

Accounts from those who met both the Master and Shoghi Effendi show the contrast vividly. Thornton Chase described Abdu'l Baha as "one who loved to serve others, even in little things." There was no distance between the Master and the believer — only warmth and oneness.

Dr. G. Haynes Holmes, a minister from New York, recalls his shock upon meeting Shoghi Effendi:"

I was instructed that I must rise when Shoghi Effendi entered, and must under no circumstances approach his person. I had to keep my distance, as though I were in the presence of some king or pope." (Sohrab, Grandson, 1943).

From servant to sovereign — this was the transformation that turned the Faith from a movement of hearts into an empire of fear.

The True Guardian – Abdu'l Baha's Spirit of Love

Abdu'l Baha once said, "There are no officers in the Cause. I do not and have not appointed any one to perform any special service…"This simple, luminous statement was the death knell to any form of clerical control — yet Shoghi ignored it, introducing hierarchy under the guise of Guardianship. From this false step , the cancer of administration grew: the UHJ, the NSAs, the LSAs — all layers of control that now suffocate the Faith.

The Free Baha'i Stand

Today, the so-called Universal House of Justice walks the same path as Shoghi — distant, bureaucratic, and obsessed with funds and reports. The light of love that once defined the Faith is dimmed under piles of statistics, accounts, and decrees.

But the Free Baha'is remember. We hold fast to the essence of Baha'u'llah's message: freedom from clergy, independence of thought, and the love that unites all hearts. We do not need Guardians to rule over us — we have Baha'u'llah to guide us.

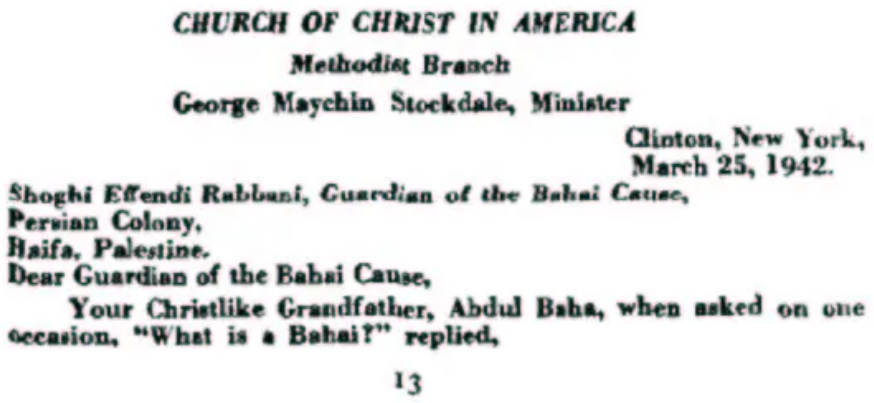
A true Guardian protects. Shoghi Effendi destroyed. A true leader unites. He divided. A true servant uplifts. He oppressed.

The time has come to return to the purity of the Cause, to the radiant simplicity of Abdu'l Baha's teachings, and to the heart of Baha'u'llah's revelation — love without control, faith without fear.

Shoghi Effendi vs. Hitler: A Startling Comparison!

In the tapestry of the Baha'i Faith's history, few figures stand as prominently as Shoghi Effendi. As the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith from 1921 until his passing in 1957, he played a pivotal role during a period marked by both progress and controversy. It's within the pages of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab's insightful work, "Abdu'l Baha's Grandson," that we uncover a wealth of intriguing insights. This article delves into key passages from the book that cast a revealing light on some of the most contentious aspects of Shoghi's leadership.

Questioning Excommunication
George Maychin Stockdale's letter, featured early in the book, unfurls the curtains on one of the more controversial practices during Shoghi's leadership: the excommunication of family members of Baha'u'llah. Stockdale's candid inquiries provide us with a glimpse into the inner debates and external criticisms that shadowed this practice during Shoghi's time. (Abdu'l Baha's Grandson, pg 13-14)



CHURCH OF CHRIST IN AMERICA
Methodist Branch
George Maychin Stockdale, Minister

Clinton, New York,
March 25, 1942.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Bahai Cause,
Persian Colony,
Haifa, Palestine.
Dear Guardian of the Bahai Cause,

Your Christlike Grandfather, Abdul Baha, when asked on one occasion, "What is a Bahai?" replied,

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"TO BE A BAHAI SIMPLY MEANS TO LOVE ALL THE WORLD: TO LOVE HUMANITY AND TRY TO SERVE IT; TO WORK FOR UNIVERSAL PEACE AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD."

(J. E. Esslemont, "Baha'U'Llah and the New Era," page 70.)

I'd like to make the above my own definition of what it is to be a Christian. On this definit u the Hindu Gandhi and the Buddhist Das Gupta are both Christians and Bahais, as well as true Hindus and Buddhists respectively. Some of my Bahai friends do me more honor than I deserve by telling me that I am a Bahai, although I am just trying to be a Christian.

If we agree on the above, and I hope we do, it is the more amazing to get word of what are called, and seem to be, your excommunications of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, your cousin; his wife; your sister and *others*.

What troubles me, my dear Sir, is the method employed. If we love all humans, and the Love of God cannot dwell in us unless we do, how can we use any other than Love and Persuasion as our means of seeking change of mind and heart in those we deem wrong? Can excommunication be a method of Love?

Now far be it from us to prematurely make up our minds in this controversy. We would hear your side, Sir. Yet we assure you that even if you should submit proof positive of the commission of the more heinous crimes by any or all of the excommunicated, (which I am sure you wouldn't,) still would we say that the WAY of LOVE demands we retain community with the vilest of sinners. THEY NEED LOVE EVEN MORE THAN NINETY and NINE SPIRITUALLY TRANSFORMED SOULS, in whom GOD (LOVE) DWELLS. That seems clear to me from both the teachings of Christ and of Baha'U'Llah, interpreted too by Paul and Abdul Baha respectively.

It troubles me too that it is reported that you are not too sure amid this world madness u t what loyalty we owe to God and what to the state. We are blessed beyond many here in America, as in Britain, in that the Draft Law here specifically makes room for us pacifists, who could not disobey God at the command of man, no matter what the consequences. We know you have the cares of a world gone mad in suicidal slaughter on your mind and heart. Yet it would be heartening to have from you a word, clear as crystal, that Bahaism officially "although making no attempt to bind the consciences of its individual members, will NOT OFFICIALLY ENDORSE, SUPPORT OR PARTICIPATE IN WAR." I have slipped into the exact words of our Methodist Branch of the Christian Church, with which I agree one hundred per cent.

Yours, strong in the Faith that LOVE (GOD) alone can win,

(Signed) George Maychin Stockdale

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Dr. Holmes' Observations: A Stark Contrast

Dr. Holmes, who visited Haifa during the era of Shoghi Effendi, provides us with a vivid canvas upon which to compare the leadership styles of Shoghi and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He aptly notes the stark contrast between the two. Shoghi Effendi, as Dr. Holmes observes, often held himself aloof, maintaining a certain distance from visitors. This is a striking divergence from 'Abdu'l Baha's warm, friendly, and informal approach to those who came to visit. These observations beckon us to ponder the nuances of Shoghi's leadership style and interpersonal dynamics. (Abdu'l Baha's Grandson, pg. 15)

In another letter, written three days later, Dr. Holmes refers to his visit to Haifa. He says in part:—

Ever since you wrote me, my mind has been going back to the day in Haifa when I made a call on Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, to pay my profound respects through him to the Bahai faith. It was at the time when I was making my pilgrimage to the sepulchres of Abdul Baha and the other prophets and saints. I remember my astonishment when I was taken into the reception room, placed in the corner farthest removed from the door, instructed that I must rise when Shoghi Effendi entered, and must under no circumstances approach his person. I was hardly used to that sort of thing, and it gave me a kind of a chill which spoiled the interview. I had previously met Abdul Baha on the occasion of his visit to this country, had sat close to him, taken his hand, and conversed with him in most informal and friendly fashion. And here in Haifa I had to keep my distance, as though I

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were in the presence of some king or pope. I didn't like it, and the memory of it as a kind of offense has lingered with me ever since. I assume that you have met with Shoghi Effendi, and I wonder if you were put through any such performance as this.

Shoghi Effendi's Comparison to Hitler: A Controversial Analogy

Among the most provocative passages in Sohrab's book is the analogy drawn between Shoghi Effendi and Hitler, as penned by Stamford in a letter. This comparison is nothing short of a searing critique, igniting a firestorm of debate within the Baha'i community. It sparks questions about Shoghi's leadership, decision-making, and the impact of his actions during his tenure as the Guardian. (Abdu'l Baha's Grandson, pg 17)

A word of thanks and congratulation are overdue. It took me exactly one month to peruse carefully the book and four pamphlets you sent me. The suit you have won is on behalf of spiritual liberty. May it stay won. But I fear you cannot save those who are mad with an *official self-deification*, or those who are greedy for *tyranny*, to *exercise or endure*. It would seem as tho' the spirit of Hitler had taken possession of the Guardian of the Cause, to cover in this fashion what he should have protected, with mortal ridicule by "*Ex-communication!*"

I know you want me to express myself. Mrs. Chanler and you can find my considered views in the paragraph quoted (pp. 221-2 "Broken Silence") spoken by Dr. Butler, my former teacher; and more explicitly in the paragraphs (pp. 163-165 "Broken Silence") written in 1925 by Dr. Alfred W. Martin, the very year I shared a trip to Beth-Shean near the Jordan with the most delightful Ruhi . . .

(Signed) William Norman Guthrie,
Retired Rector of St. Mark's-In-The Bouwerie,
New York, N. Y.

Shoghi Effendi's Stance on Marriage and Excommunication

The book ventures into Shoghi Effendi's stringent stance on marriages within the Baha'i community. It becomes evident that Shoghi had strong reservations about his female family members marrying foreigners or non-Baha'is. Those who dared to cross this boundary faced the threat of excommunication. This stance leaves us with important inquiries about the lines of religious authority, individual choice, and the cost of adhering to one's principles within the Baha'i Faith. (Abdu'l Baha's Grandson, pg 22)

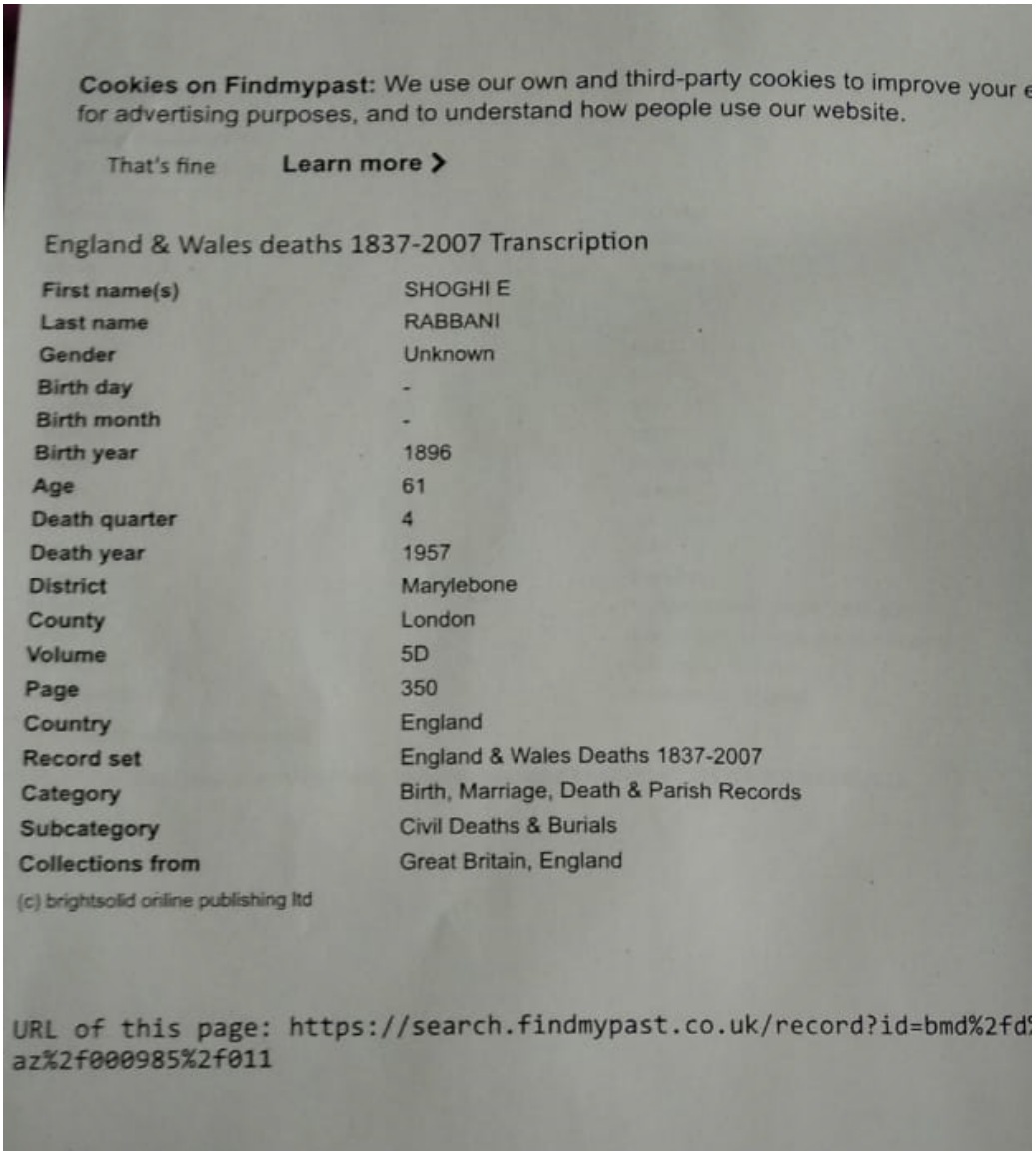
Furthermore, Shoghi Effendi did not approve of foreigners, as husbands to the members of his family; he also did not approve of prospective husbands who were not Bahais or who had lately become Bahais. These restrictions set his cousins completely apart from other young people, so it is not surprising that they fell in love among themselves.

In conclusion, "Abdu'l Baha's Grandson" offers us a compelling and, at times, challenging exploration of Shoghi Effendi's leadership. These referenced passages force us to grapple with the complexities and controversies surrounding his tenure. Shoghi Effendi's usurped Guardianship highlights the need for every leader to face scrutiny and debate. The Baha'i community continues to engage with these historical questions, seeking a deeper understanding of its past leaders' visions while navigating the ever-evolving needs of the present. Debates arose regarding his approach to excommunication, his interactions with Baha'is and non-Baha'is, and the extent of his authority within the Baha'i community. These complexities emphasize that open discourse and examination are essential for effective leadership, as they ensure

accountability, development, and the ongoing refinement of a movement's vision and principles.

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 7, Edition 5

Shoghi Effendi's Death Certificate declares his gender to be unknown



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England & Wales deaths 1837-2007 Transcription

First name(s)	SHOGHI E
Last name	RABBANI
Gender	Unknown
Birth day	-
Birth month	-
Birth year	1896
Age	61
Death quarter	4
Death year	1957
District	Marylebone
County	London
Volume	5D
Page	350
Country	England
Record set	England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007
Category	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records
Subcategory	Civil Deaths & Burials
Collections from	Great Britain, England

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URL of this page: https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=bmd%2fd
az%2f000985%2f011

As can be noticed, the gender of Shoghi Effendi in the certificate has been mentioned as "UNKNOWN". Looks like the talks going around of him being a eunuch/gay was correct. The person who has shared this has claimed that he has more such eye-opening documents which he would share at appropriate timings. We are eagerly looking forward to it.

(Source: The Caravan Magazine, Vol. 4, Edition 5)

Teachings of Baha'u'llah

The following texts of Baha'u'llah, concerning the return of the soul or the reincarnation, are taken from His utterances, entitled the "Sacred Tablet:"

"Regarding thy question about the 'return,' know thou that the 'return' is like unto the 'beginning (the first incarnation), for as thou seest the 'beginning, likewise see thou the 'return' and be of those who can see. That thou may'st have clear understanding, see thou the 'beginning' identical with the 'return and the 'return' identical with the 'beginning.'

"Know thou that all things in all times, by the command of thy God the Almighty, 'begin' and 'return. But the return which is the purpose of God and which was written in His Holy and Sacred Tablet, and which foretold His servants concerning it, is the 'return' of the creatures at the Day of Resurrection. This is the cause of the 'return as thou hast seen in the days of God, and wast of those who testify. By His command this 'return' is to be recognized of those whom He wisheth to be known. Verily, He is the One who doeth what He desireth. Look thou not regarding this position into limitations and names. See thou when the Point of Beyan appeared (the Bab, glory be to him), how he decided that the one who believed first was Mohammed, the Messenger of God.

"Is it meet for anyone to object, saying, this man is a Persian and Mohammed was an Arab, or, the name of this one is Huseyn and the name of the other was Mohammed? By the Self of God the Most High, No!

"Know thou that at the Day of the Appearance everything [man], with the exception of God, must return and all are on the same level, though they are of the high and of the low. No one can recognize the 'return of anyone, save after its declaration by the command of God. Verily, He declareth whom He wisheth. But after the imparting of the Word of God to the creatures he, whosoever listeneth and believeth, would be considered of the highest of the creatures, even though he were of those who carry ashes; and he, whosoever rejecteth it, is of the lowest of the creatures, even though the people should consider him as a redeemer, and

even though he has all the Material and Spiritual instructions."

IN THE NAME OF HIM WHO IS SEATED UPON THE THRONE.

This tablet hath descended from the Presence of God, the Ruler of the Names, to the people of Baha, who speak not save that which hath been uttered by the Tongue of Might and Power, and who follow not every lying claimer. These are they who have drank of the wine of faithfulness from the hands of the Providence o£ their God the Mighty, Chosen. Ye shall hear the voice of a croaker; heed ye him not. Leave him alone and advance toward the Kublah (Center) of all horizons. All preceding Manifestations were ended in this Manifestation, which hath appeared in truth; and all preceding lights have merged into this horizon, from which the Sun of Might and Glory hath dawned. Blessed is the soul which educateth the creatures in accordance with the commandments of God which have been written in the Books and Tablets.

Say: If every day a Manifestation were to appear the command of God would have no effect in the cities and countries. This is a Manifestation, the like unto which shall manifest Himself but once in five hundred thousand years. Thus have we uncovered the veil and have lifted up the curtains. Blessed is he who knoweth the purpose of God, for he who comprehendeth it, his heart shall rejoice and his steadfastness in the Cause of God would be in such wise that none in the universe can lead him astray. In this tablet we have uncovered a secret of the Mysteries of this Appearance and have secluded that which ought to be hidden; otherwise, the clamour of the wicked would be raised up. By God the truth is; none knoweth this save the one to whom it was decreed. If anyone should attain the fragrances of this Garment (Manifestation) he would be attracted in such wise that he would be elevated above the contingent worlds. Should we fully explain what we have uttered in this tablet, pens and ink would not suffice. Having this unimaginable and Supreme State, yet thou nearest what those who are led ' astray say against Him. We have unveiled for thee one of the secrets as a favor upon thee, that thou mightest thank thy Lord the Mighty, the All-Wise.

Oh, My Name, we have uttered in most of the tablets that this Cause is Great and Great, yet none hath comprehended its Greatness, but those whom thy God the Mighty, the Generous, hath chosen. We have abandoned the people of superstitions in the wilderness of selfishness and lust, occupying themselves with that which they have of imaginations. Verily, thy God is Self-Subsistent and Supreme. The Standard of "There is no God but He," hath been raised up; still they speak that which they have heard from the vile and worthless. We hereby give thee tidings of the Word which appeared in the Garment of Splendor between the earths and the Heavens.

Say: Praise be to Thee, o Thou whose bounty hath surrounded me and hast promised me with such a promise not before vouchsafed to the righteous. Enow thou that the, Tablet of Ahkam (commandments) hath descended from the Rising Place of Inspiration of thy God, and we, in truth, will send it as a command from Our Presence. Verily, thy God is the Exalted, the Chosen. We have uttered for thet a, tablet before this one and have sent it from another place, that thou mightest ascertain that the promise of God hath preceded every other promise. We ask God to help thee in [spreading His Cause and to confirm thee in. that which He wisheth and desireth in all times. Verily, the Beha is upon thee and upon those who spoke with what was uttered by the Tongue of Knowledge in the contingent world; that there is no God but He, the Powerful, the

Exalted, the One, the Single, the Supreme and the Mighty.

My greetings are upon my friends, who believed in God the Mighty, the One.

(Received from Akka, October, 1900.)

HE IS EXALTED ABOVE ALL THOSE WHO ARE UPON EARTH AND IN THE HEAVEN.

Still the Voice of God is ascending and the Light of His Appearance from the horizon of the Mount is shining and reflecting; yet the clouds of darkness shall come after this light, and the mists of hatred shall follow. In those days the rays of The Sun of Truth shall be stopped from shining, but at last its light shall victoriously reappear, the Cause of God shall spread and His Command shall be exalted. We command the followers of El Hack (Glory be to Him) to be faithful, pious and to do that which will contribute to the progress of the world and to the elevation of the Word of God.

Oh, people of God, it is meet for you to only display the exaltation of God by making your actions, movements and steadfastness as mirrors of His Will. Always "This Oppressed One" commands the seekers and the friends to do that which will cause development and elevation. Every existing atom beareth witness that He seeketh naught for Himself.

Praise thou "The Ancient of Days," for He mentioned thee while He was surrounded and harassed by the attacks of nations.

We ask God to sustain thee and the people of that country, to confirm you in praising and mentioning Him, and to grant unto you the Wisdom and Knowledge. Verily, there is no God but He, the One, the Commander, the Ruler, the Mighty and the Generous.

Consult the council, and do thou according to its behests, for in numerous tablets have we commanded all to establish the council. We ask God to help thee and His people to do what He wisheth and desireth, and we ask Him to pardon thy parents and all those who have returned unto Him, for He is the Most Merciful and the Creator of those who are in the Heavens and upon the earth.

IN MY NAME, WHICH SPEAKETH IN THE KINGDOM OF KNOWLEDGE.

A remembrance hath been issued from Our Presence to him who hath believed in the One, the All-Knowing, and hath advanced toward the Center of Creation and hath confessed that which the Tongue of Might hath uttered. "The Kingdom is to God the Lord of the Supreme Throne."

Verily, El BEHA mentioned thee at the time when the lamentations and sorrows of His heart were great, because of what the hands of the tyrants had wrought against Him. Verily, the croaker hath uttered his evil voice and the tyrant hath risen for oppression.

My Supreme Pen beareth witness to this: Verily, it informeth you concerning what hath been committed against the Perfection, the Ancient of Days, by the hosts of infidels who in appearance do move about Him; but the attitude of their innermost is known to God, the Lord of the Lofty Throne. By the Life of God, this Book is lamenting and the Supreme Pen is weeping and crying out: "Oh, people, fear God and deny ye not Him, who came from the Heaven of Bounty with a Power which vanquisheth all those who are in the heavens and upon the earth." As thou hearest the Voice at once direct thy face toward God and say: "The Splendour be to Thee, o Lord of all the worlds, for Thou hast remembered me in the prison at Acre, whilst Thou wast amongst the hands of those who cast away Thy Covenant and Faith and disbelieved Thy Word, which surrounded those who exist in the past and in the future."

El BEHA be upon thee and upon everyone who is steadfast and faithful!

HE IS THE SUPREME, THE MOST HIGH.

The paper was seen and its contents understood. Verily, it is the truth that those who are faithful in the Path of God are few. In this present time the movement of the period of tradition is to be renewed. Shortly many shall follow their worldly lusts, abandoning the Essence of Piety and occupying themselves with that which is naught.

Verily, they shall neglect the Aim of the Worlds. This gentle breeze which is breathing from the Spiritual Rizwan shall be stilled and the Morning of Truth shall be exchanged for the evening of falsity. If possible, then, it is meet to shut the eye of criticism and open that of affection; otherwise, cursing and execration, hatred and enmity, shall be renewed as in the past times. Now, this condition exists, yet with loving kindness we treat them. This Epistle is sent to the Followers of Baha'u'llah by Muhammed Husein Shirazi.

In the year 1360 A. H. (1844 A. D.) a certain young man appeared in Persia, whose original name was Ali-Muhammed, but as he claimed in the beginning of his career that he was the gate of knowledge, he was called the "Bab" (gate) and his followers "Babists."

Finally he declared himself to be the one whose appearance was expected by Islam, called by the Shiites "Ckaim" and by the Sunnites "Mahdi." From the commencement of his work his great subject was the glad tidings of the approaching event, the greatest Manifestation of the Promised and Generous One. He mentioned Him in his utterances with supreme deference, just as John the Baptist spoke about the appearance of Jesus Christ: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with

fire."—St. Matthew, 3-11.

Sheik Ahmad-al-Ahsai, a great, learned man, who appeared in the thirteenth century A. H., had foretold the coming of the "Bab" and taught his disciples and the people to expect the coming of the "Ckaim" at any time. After the death of this Sheik one of his disciples, Haji Seyyid Kazim- el-Reshti, who was as profound a student as his master, took his position and at once began to teach and preach openly the approaching appearance of the "Ckaim." He gave many explanations of the sayings and teachings of his Sheik concerning that appearance. On his deathbed he urged his disciples to start at once in search of the promised One. These two learned doctors have written many things on this subject which we cannot insert in this brief account.

When the "Bab" declared himself in the city of Shiraz, the capital of Fars, one of the disciples of the Sheik, Seyyid Kazim, and the oldest one of those who were searching for the Promised One, was of the first to believe in the "Bab" and embrace the new faith. Many theological doctors learned men and people of all classes gathered around the "Bab," believed in him, and were deeply stirred by his wonderful thought and knowledge. He gave to them the glad tidings of the coming of the Greatest Manifestation. He frequently mentioned in his writings the attributes of "Him whom God shall manifest"—His Great Appearance—and emphasized the importance of His Manifestation. And, although he claimed for himself the highest state of spirituality, yet he considered himself naught and as a poor servant in comparison with the aforesaid One. The "Bab" did not definitely appoint the time for the Manifestation of the Father. Sometimes he mentioned a fixed time, and then again he spoke of Him as if He were present, saying: "All is in His hand; if He so desireth, He may even now declare Himself."

He frequently said that His Appearance might take place either in the ninth year or the nineteenth—that is to say, 1269 A. H. (1853 A. D.), or 1280 A. H. (1863 A. D.). The "Bab" continued to give these glad tidings to the people from the beginning of his mission until he was executed in the city of Tabreez, the capital of Atherbijan, in 1266 A. H., on the 28th day of Shaban—that is, 1850 A. D., July 9th.

Three years later He whom the Babists expected appeared in His Name, El-Beha, declaring that he was the Promised One of the Scriptures. He manifested Himself to the Babists twice—once to a few of His followers in the ninth year after the first appearance of the "Bab;" the second time in the nineteenth year from the Bab, 1280 A. H. (1863 A.D.)-

[Note by Translator — His manifestation to the whole world, inviting the rulers and the great people of the earth to His spiritual banquet, "to eat and drink with the elect," was in 1284- A. H. (1867)]

Baha'u'llah, since He declared Himself, has conclusively proved from all Scriptures that He was the Promised One. He has uttered tablets and written epistles which attracted the hearts and refreshed the souls. The noble life he lived astonished and impressed the people, and His fame spread to all countries. All who knew Him acknowledged His Supremacy and were awed by the loftiness and greatness of His character.

His claim that He was the Promised One of the Holy Scriptures and that His Appearance was the Greatest, and that it will take place only once in every five hundred thousand years, may be found in His many writings. He also proved that a higher virtue and greater grace distinguished His day. The following quotations from the prophecies in the Holy Books prove the truth of His claim:

"Psalm 24, 7-10. Lift up your heads, 0 ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. (8.) Who is this King of Glory? The Lord Strong and Mighty, the Lord Mighty in Battle. (9.) Lift up your heads, 0 ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. (10.) Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. Selah.

"Isaiah, 4—2. In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious and the fruits of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

Also, Psalm 50, 1-3; Psalm 108, 10.

"Baha'u'llah called Himself 'the Branch' in many off His Tablets, and I have seen some of them in His own handwriting.

"Isaiah 28, 5-6; Isaiah 33, 16. He shall dwell on high, His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given Him; His waters shall be sure.

"Isaiah 35, 1-2. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and re]oice, even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the Excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the Excellency of our God.

"Isaiah 40, 3-5. The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our Lord. Every valley shall be; exalted and every mountain and hill shall he made low; and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places : plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

"Isaiah 40, 6-10; Isaiah 62, 7-8. How beautiful upon' the mountians are the feet of Him to bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that sayeth unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see, eye to i eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

The seventh verse of the 52nd chapter of Isaiah is considered to be a prophecy concerning the Bab when he

was imprisoned in the mountains and gave the tidings concerning the appearance of Baha'u'llah.

"Isaiah 62, 2-11; Isaiah 65, 17-18; Joel 2, 1-2. Blow ye the trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. Joel 2—3, 4, 10, 11, 31, 32; Joel 3—14, 17, 21; Amos 1—2; Micah 4—1, 2. But in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the ' hills; and the people shall flow into it. And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths, for the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Micah 4—3, 4, 5, 7; Nahum 1—15; Zachariah 2—10. Sing and rejoice, 0 daughter of Zion; for, lo! I come and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. Ziich. 6—12. And speak unto him, saying: Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord."

Of His texts, in which He calls Himself "The Branch are the following in his own handwriting: "Hark, 0 people, to the voice of God through this Blessed Branch, the Hand of God, the Ruler, the Victorious, the Visible, the Invisible, the Known, who has planted in the Eternal Garden these words: 'There is no God but I, the Exalted, the Self-Existing.' "

He also uttered the following verse, which was written in a letter sent to the wife of the Bab, who was named the "Leaf of Paradise:" "God has remembered the Leaf of Paradise, that she may hear the melodious voice of the Leaf of Eternity from this Branch, who sprang up in His name, El ABHA."

Respecting the building of the Temple, there is a book called the "Book of the Temple," written on a paper thus * * * and at its conclusion He gave the following text:

"And thus we built the temple with hands of Might and Power. Were ye of those who knew? This is the Temple of which ye were promised in the Book. It is meet for ye to advance to it, were ye of those who reason. Be just, 0 people of the earth; see ye not that this Temple is a better one than that which was built of clay? Advance to it, for thus ye are commanded by God, the Exalted, the Self-Existing"

"Zachariah 8—3. Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of Hosts, the holy mountain. Zech. 9—9; Zech. 14-9; Malachi 3—1, 2. Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His Temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap:

"Malachi 4—5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of

the Lord."

It is said that the messenger of the Covenant is the Bab, who gave tidings of the appearance of Baha'u'llah, took His Covenant and prepared the way before Him. He is Elijah the Prophet, who was mentioned in the 4th chapter of Malachi. Baha'u'llah plainly declared in many of His well-known tablets that the Bab was Elijah.

"St. John 14—26, 30; St. John 15—26; St. John 16—. 12-14; St. Matthew 23—39; St. Matthew 24; St. Matthew 25—31."

The teachings of Baha'u'llah are all based upon union and love, and command us to abandon hatred and strife. The fundamental principle of His creed is to stop religious disputes and to root out the enmity of faith. He expressly, taught the necessity for the cessation of religious wars and. the equal necessity for the consorting of all peoples, of all 'faiths, with pure love and spirituality. This is the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah. — (Isaiah 2—2-4.)

In His writings, Baha'u'llah uttered numerous texts emphasizing these great principles. They are full of significance, and those who hear them cannot but feel deeply impressed. They compel every just soul to testify to His Supreme benevolence. We shall quote some of them, in accordance with the necessity of our subject. One of the most important points asserted in his writings is that there cannot be a true Manifestation (a prophet) before the completion of a full thousand years from his appearance, and if anybody should claim to be a prophet no one ought to believe in him, even though he could utter the texts. For this reason, if every now and then other Manifestations should take place, confusion would follow and the Word of God would lose its effect and no good results could be attained therefrom. The Holy Law-Giver has in every Manifestation a Supreme infallibility. His command is the command of God. His words are the words of God, and no other besides Him has any such authority. Everyone should abide under His shadow, follow His commands, and be responsible for his sayings and actions according to His laws. He who rises after Him for the helping of His work must spread His Word and practice His commandments; and his position ought to be that of absolute servitude. He has no authority to change a single letter of the commandments contained in His Books. In His writings alone is to be found the true balance, the supreme test. In every ease those who differ must consult His Books for a decision. He ordered His followers to consult and study His utterances upon all occasions, and especially whenever they might differ upon some question after His departure.

Of His utterances are these: That His Sons are the finger-posts pointing toward Him, and the executors of His command. They are controlled by His laws, but have no power to change one letter of His commandments. They have the highest position among His followers; and all must honour and respect them, appreciate their position, and obey them, so long as they work in the Shadow of His Word and in proper servitude of His law. He gave utterance, in several epistles and tablets, to many admonitions for His people. He commanded them to live in concert and love each other, and to deal with people of all religions in a spirit of unity and friendliness.

One of the great events of His days is, that after His arrival at the prison of Acre He sent with one of His friends an epistle to the Shah of Persia. The bearer, who was in the prime of youth, delivered the letter to the

Shah while he was on a hunting expedition. In that epistle Baha'u'llah asked the Shah to call Him and the most learned doctors oil the empire together, in order to discuss His claim and the differences between His teaching and that of the Shiites— this meeting to be held in the presence of the Shah. This is considered a wonderful thing, for the Shah was a powerful one, and the doctors were all bitter enemies of Baha'u'llah, and at the same time their word was law to the Shiites, who submissively obeyed all their commands. Therefore, His request to hold this conference must be regarded as a conclusive proof of His sincerity and of His ability to substantiate His claims in every particular.

One of the strongest evidences which Baha'u'llah has embodied in some of His epistles as proof of His claim was the martyrdom of those followers of the new religion, who were so persecuted in His country, and although slaughtered in the cruellest manner, were faithful to the end. These tragedies resemble those which took place amongst the early Christians, but it is said that the people of our time are even more faithful and devoted, for some martyrs of our day have killed themselves with their own hands out of devotion to their Lord. Some of the murdered women and children displayed a devotion, the like of which has never been heard of in the past ages. We can but mention these events in this brief article, but should anyone desire to know the details, let him ask to see the Book of Martyrs.

It is a well-known fact that differences of thought, dissensions, have taken place in every religion that has appeared in this world, either in the day of the Law-Giver or after his departure. This is proved by the histories of past ages. It is an event which has always happened. In such cases the wise will judge the different thoughts by the just judge, the Book of the Law. They will approve of that which is in perfect accordance with it, and reject that which differs from its teachings, even though it came from a high source. For the true and only judge is the Book by which everything, every case and every thought must be justified.

Let us now proceed to give a short account of what happened after the departure of Baha'u'llah. His followers differed among themselves regarding very important questions in His teachings. Such dissensions have occurred in all ages, because those who have ambitious aims will at once, when they have the opportunity, begin to sow the seeds of corruption in the hearts of the people, and thus gain for themselves supremacy and riches. But to return to our subject. The oldest son of Baha'u'llah, Abbas Effendi, together with some relatives (not by blood) and other designing persons, have intrigued in a rather peculiar manner to gain personal benefits and the most absolute supremacy. But they found obstacles in their way, the greatest of them being the writings of Baha'u'llah, which are widely spread in many countries. These utterances contain that which will deprive them of authority, disappoint their hopes, and refute their claim. Another important obstacle is the three Branches and the family, for they will never agree to disobey even the slightest command contained in the books of Baha'u'llah. In short, Abbas Effendi claims the power of knowing the inner and a divine attitude, and explains this in different and ambiguous ways. Thus they have planted the seeds of doubt in the hearts of those who have not sufficient knowledge of the utterances of Baha'u'llah, and but little understanding of His teachings.

One of the seeds of corruption which he sowed in the hearts of many is his claim that he is the Manifestation of the Only Son of God—that is to say, the Lord Jesus Christ while all the Holy Books plainly prophecy of one Manifestation only—i.e., that of the Everlasting Father, the Eternal God. Abbas Effendi claimed this in order to induce Christians to accept him as sole authority. Indeed, he does not desire that the Supreme Position of

the Father should be acknowledged. His policy is to please those people around him. After they come under his absolute control he will claim for himself every supreme attitude—that there is none beside him—as he has already done among his immediate followers. To keep these people in his power he has tried by every means to prevent them from reading the works of Baha'u'llah, which would show them plainly the falsity of his claims and teachings. These works would make them aware of the harm which has resulted in the past from holding to false doctrines, for they lead back to barbarism and have ever been a hindrance in the way of civilization, knowledge and science. Briefly, we may say that some people were seduced by his honed words to believe in the truth of his claims and follow his teachings, which are full of superstition and distorted imagination. In the beginning the claims were not made openly, but merely hinted at vaguely, but when he and his supporters discovered that the wise among the believers did not oppose them and kept silent — this they did, fearing to start disturbance and dissension—they were encouraged and with extreme boldness showed forth their false pretensions. Then those who were wise, faithful and upright rose up in defence of the true faith given them by Baha'u'llah, and from the epistles of their Lord, clearly proved the strength and justice of the stand they had taken. Those who were trying to lay a foundation upon which to build their supremacy found that this uprising of the honest and sincere believers would be in the way of their interest. They knew that if their simple-minded followers were allowed to meet with the pure in the faith and discuss the differences they would be awakened to see the truth, for the proofs of the truth are from the striking words of their Lord, Baha'u'llah. Fearful of the result, Abbas Effendi has prevented and prohibited his followers from speaking to or associating with those who will not blindly obey him, and thus laid the foundation of enmity and revived the barbarian creed, that to associate with those of different faith is a cause of sin and uncleanness. Even now the party of the younger Branches and the family of Baha'u'llah still invite those people to follow the commands of their Lord—i.e., to associate with all in a spirit of friendliness and kindness. But the invitation is of no avail, tor they are getting worse and worse in their attitude of unfriendliness and enmity.

The actions of the UHJ are against the basic teachings of Baha'u'llah

THE MESSAGES AND ACTIONS OF UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE ARE AGAINST THE BASIC TEACHINGS OF BAHA'U'LLAH

A fundamental teaching of Baha'u'llah is the oneness of the world of humanity. Addressing mankind, He says: "Ye are all leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch." By this it is meant that the world of humanity is like a tree, the nations or peoples are the different limbs or branches of that tree and the individual human creatures are as the Fruits and blossoms thereof. In this way His Holiness Baha'u'llah expressed the oneness of humankind whereas in all religious teachings Of the past, the human world has been represented as divided into two Parts, one known as the people of the Book of God or the pure tree and the other the people of infidelity and error or the evil tree. The former were considered as belonging to the faithful and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel; one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. His Holiness Baha'u'llah removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity and this principle is specialized in His teachings.... ('Abdu'l Baha, Baha'i World Faith – 'Abdu'l Baha Section, p. 246)

A religion whose founders state that the practice of shunning has been abolished and nullified and those we should see no one as an enemy or draw lines between ourselves and others; and yet we see that the Universal House of Justice asking the Baha'is to practice these very things, shunning, seeing enemies, drawing lines.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE UHJ:

The need to protect the Faith from the attacks of its enemies may not be generally appreciated by the friends, particularly in places where attacks have been infrequent. However, it is certain that such opposition will increase, become concerted, and eventually universal. The writings clearly foreshadow not only an intensification of the machinations of internal enemies, but a rise in the hostility and opposition of its external enemies, whether religious or secular, as the Cause pursues its onward march towards ultimate victory. Therefore, in the light of the warnings of the Guardian, the Auxiliary Boards for Protection should keep "constantly" a "watchful eye" on those "who are known to be enemies, or to have been put out of the Faith", discreetly investigate their activities, alert intelligently the friends to the opposition inevitably to come, explain how each crisis in God's Faith has always proved to be a blessing in disguise, and prepare

them for the “dire contest which is destined to range the Army of Light against the forces of darkness”.

(The Universal House of Justice, The Institution of the Counsellors, p. 16)

One must ask oneself why Baha’u’llah would remove the past religious practice of dividing humanity the “pure tree”-“the faithful”, from “the evil tree”-“the irreligious” only to have the Universal House of Justice itself reinstate the very same past religious practice of dividing humanity: “the army of light” from “the forces of darkness”?

The Other example of betrayal of the Basic Baha’i teachings is the Court case slammed by the Haifan Baha’is against the minority Baha’i communities like Orthodox Baha’is lead by Mr. Joel Marangella, Baha’is under the provision of Covenant lead by Mr. Neal Chase and The Reform Baha’i Faith lead by Mr. Fredrick Glaysher.

Why do Baha’is so easily and conveniently dismiss the universal teachings of the Baha’i faith? Why are the universal teachings within the Baha’i faith in effect eliminated?

It is the duty of the every lover of Baha’u’llah to free themselves from the clutches of UHJ and follow the FREE BAHA’I FAITH.

The Ascension of Abdu'l Baha

The Ascension of Abdu'l Baha (1844–1921), like the Day of the Covenant (November 26), is a Baha'i holy day honouring Abdu'l Baha, who succeeded Baha'u'llah (1819–1892), prophet-founder of the Baha'ı Faith, and led the Baha'i community from 1892 to 1921. Abdu'l Baha passed away in his home on November 28, 1921, in Haifa, Israel, at the age of 77.

The term "Ascension," of Christian origin, is a reverential term, implying that the person referred to, by virtue of a high spiritual station, "ascended" to heaven and dwells in Paradise.

All the funeral arrangements were done by Abdu'l Baha's sister, Bahiyyih Khanum. The funeral procession took place on November 29, 1921 and was attended by 10,000 mourners of numerous religious backgrounds. In His old age, Abdu'l Baha remained remarkably vigorous. He was a loving father not only to the Baha'is, but to the entire humanity. It has been mentioned by Mohammed Ali Faizi in his book, The Life of Abdu'l Baha on page 341 that the Master used to attend Friday congregation prayers at a Mosque in Israel and used to give alms to beggars after the prayers.

In spontaneous tributes to an admired personality, Abdu'l Baha was eulogized as One who led humanity to the "Way of Truth," as a "pillar of peace" and the embodiment of "glory and greatness." His correspondence guided global efforts to establish an organizational framework for the community. His interaction with a stream of pilgrims to the Holy Land provided another instrument for instructing and encouraging believers from around the world.

Abdu'l Baha's mortal remains were laid to rest in one of the chambers of the Shrine of the Bab on Mount Carmel.

Abdu'l Baha's coffin coming out of a mosque in Haifa, Israel

The Ascension of the Bab: A Defining Moment in Baha'i History -By Elizabeth Harding

The Ascension of the Bab is a profound event in Baha'i history, commemorating the martyrdom of Siyyid Ali Mu ammad, known as the Bab, who was a pivotal figure in the development of the Baha'i Faith. His life and subsequent martyrdom had an immense impact on religious history and continue to be a source of inspiration and reflection for Baha'is around the world.

Born in 1819 in Shiraz, Persia, the Bab declared His mission in 1844, proclaiming Himself as the Gate (Bab) to a new era of spiritual and social transformation. His teachings emphasized the imminent arrival of "He Whom God Shall Manifest," later recognized as Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith. The Bab's teachings challenged the entrenched religious orthodoxy of the time, advocating for the spiritual and social renewal of society.

Despite the transformative nature of His message, the Bab faced severe persecution from religious and political authorities. His teachings, which called for the reformation of societal structures and the upliftment of the oppressed, threatened the established order. Consequently, the Bab and His followers, known as Babis, endured intense persecution and violence.

The Bab's martyrdom on July 9, 1850, is a pivotal moment in Baha'i history. After being imprisoned and subjected to numerous trials and interrogations, the Bab was executed in the barracks square of Tabriz, Persia. He was publicly shot by a firing squad in a tragic and dramatic event witnessed by thousands. This act was intended to extinguish His influence and the spread of His teachings, but instead, it only served to galvanize His followers and solidify His legacy.

Accounts of the Bab's execution are filled with remarkable details that underscore the profound spiritual significance of the event. It is said that the initial firing squad, composed of Christian soldiers, failed to kill Him, with the Bab emerging unharmed from the smoke of gunfire. This miraculous occurrence further fueled the devotion of His followers and the awe of onlookers. A second firing squad was then assembled, and the Bab was ultimately executed.

The remains of the Bab were secretly recovered by His followers and were eventually interred on Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel, where the Shrine of the Bab now stands as a symbol of His enduring legacy. The Shrine of the Bab is a place of pilgrimage and reverence for Baha'is, representing the profound sacrifice He made for the advancement of humanity.

The Bab's martyrdom is not merely a historical event but a profound spiritual lesson for Baha'is. It exemplifies the ultimate sacrifice for one's beliefs and the enduring power of faith in the face of persecution. The Bab's life and martyrdom are a testament to the transformative power of divine revelation and the enduring impact of spiritual leadership.

In the modern Baha'i community, the anniversary of the Bab's martyrdom, known as the Ascension of the Bab, is observed with solemnity and reverence. Baha'is around the world gather for prayers, reflections, and readings from the Bab's writings. It is a time to honor His legacy, reflect on the sacrifices made by early believers, and renew their commitment to the principles of the Baha'i Faith.

The teachings of the Bab laid the foundation for the Baha'i Faith, emphasizing the oneness of humanity, the equality of men and women, and the need for universal education. His vision of a just and equitable society continues to inspire Baha'is to work towards the betterment of the world. The Bab's call for social and

spiritual transformation resonates deeply with contemporary global challenges, making His message as relevant today as it was in the 19th century.

Moreover, the Bab's emphasis on independent investigation of truth and the rejection of blind imitation underscores the Baha'i principle of seeking knowledge and understanding through personal exploration and reflection. This principle encourages Baha'is to engage with the world thoughtfully and critically, fostering a spirit of inquiry and openness.

The story of the Bab and His martyrdom also highlights the theme of resilience in the face of adversity. Despite the immense challenges and persecutions faced by the Bab and His followers, their unwavering faith and dedication to His teachings laid the groundwork for the establishment and spread of the Baha'i Faith. This resilience is a source of strength and inspiration for Baha'is today, reminding them of the importance of perseverance in their efforts to promote unity, justice, and peace.

In conclusion, the Ascension of the Bab is a moment of profound significance in Baha'i history. It marks the sacrifice of a great spiritual leader whose teachings continue to inspire and guide millions of people worldwide. The Bab's life and martyrdom are a testament to the enduring power of faith, the importance of independent investigation of truth, and the transformative impact of spiritual leadership. As Baha'is commemorate this event, they honor His legacy and reaffirm their commitment to the principles of the Baha'i Faith, working towards the betterment of humanity and the realization of a just and unified world.

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 8, Edition 3

The Bab

The Báb – Herald of the Bahá'í Faith

The Life of the Báb

On a spring evening in 1844, a conversation took place between two young men that heralded a new era for the human race. A Persian merchant announced to a traveller in the city of Shiraz that He was the Bearer of a Divine Revelation destined to transform the spiritual life of humanity. The merchant's name was Siyyid 'Alí-Muhammad, and He is known to history as the Báb (meaning "the Gate" in Arabic).

The middle of the 19th century was one of the most turbulent periods in the world's history. Great revolutions were under way. In parts of Europe and North America, time-worn social structures and relationships were being challenged by sudden and unprecedented changes in the fields of agriculture, industry, and economics. At the same time, throughout the world followers of divers religions perceived that humanity was on the cusp of a new stage in its development, and many prepared themselves for the imminent coming of a Promised One, praying fervently that they would recognise Him.

A Quest Fulfilled

A young scholar named Mulla Husayn was one such soul engaged in a life-changing quest. He felt drawn, as if by a magnet, to Shiraz—a city renowned for the perfume of its roses and the singing of nightingales. On the evening of 22 May 1844, as he approached the gate of the city, he was greeted by a radiant young man who wore a green turban. This stranger greeted Mulla Husayn as if he were a lifelong friend.

"The Youth who met me outside the gate of Shiraz overwhelmed me with expressions of affection and loving-kindness," recalled Mulla Husayn. "He extended to me a warm invitation to visit His home, and there refresh myself after the fatigues of my journey."

The two men spent the entire night immersed in conversation. Mulla Husayn was astonished to discover that each of the characteristics he was seeking in the Promised One was manifest in this young man. Before departing early the next morning, his Host addressed to him these words: "O thou who art the first to believe in Me! Verily I say, I am the Báb, the Gate of God…Eighteen souls must, in the beginning, spontaneously and of their own accord, accept Me and recognize the truth of My Revelation."

Within several weeks of the Báb's declaration, seventeen more people had, by their own spontaneous efforts, recognized His station, had renounced the comforts and security of their old way of life, and—severed from all attachments—had set out on the mission of spreading His teachings. These first eighteen followers of the Báb became known collectively as the "Letters of the Living."

One of them, the poetess Tahirih, was to play a pivotal role in breaking with the past, raising the call to full equality between women and men. The last member of the group, a young man who was given the title Quddus—meaning "The Most Holy"—displayed a level of devotion and courage that made him the most revered of the Letters of the Living.

Mulla Husayn was overwhelmed at the words that poured forth from the Báb that night. The Báb demonstrated an innate wisdom that, even when He was young, had left His family awe-struck. "He is not to be treated as a mere child," His schoolmaster had told them, "He, verily, stands in no need of teachers such as I."

The Mission of the Báb

Born in Shiraz, a city in southern Iran, on 20 October 1819, the Báb was the symbolic gate between past ages of prophecy and a new age of fulfilment for humanity. His primary purpose was to awaken the people to the fact that a new period in human history had begun, one which would witness the unification of the entire human race and the emergence of a world civilization of spiritual and material prosperity. This great day would be established through the influence of a divinely inspired Educator, whom the Báb referred to as "He Whom God shall make manifest." It was His own mission, the Báb declared, to herald the coming of this promised Manifestation of God. The Báb explained that the new Manifestation would usher in an age of peace and justice that was the hope of every longing heart and the promise of every religion. The Báb instructed His followers to spread this message throughout the country and to prepare people for this long-awaited day.

The Báb's message aroused hope and excitement among people from every walk of life. Although a number of prominent Muslim clerics accepted the Báb, many others felt insecure and threatened by His growing influence and feared their entrenched positions of privilege and authority would be threatened by the empowerment of the people. They denounced the Báb's teachings as heretical and set out to destroy Him and His followers. Controversy raged in mosques and schools, in streets and bazaars throughout the land.

As a result, the Báb was banished—from city to city, from prison to prison. But none of the plans His enemies devised could prevent His influence from spreading. In every place He was sent, His grace and the magnetic attraction of His personality won the admiration of civic leaders and townspeople. Callous prison governors and soldiers guarding Him became His followers. Each time, believing they were extinguishing the flame of His influence, the authorities merely added fuel to His life-giving light. In time, the Báb's popularity grew to such an extent that some prominent clergymen appealed to the government to have Him executed. The Bábís, shut off from their leader, boldly defended themselves against the full force of the state, which was summoned for their destruction. Thousands of His followers—men, women and children—suffered cruel and brutal deaths.

The Execution of the Báb

In 1850, Mirza Taqi Khan (Grand Vizier of Nasiri'd-Din Shah) ordered the Báb's execution. When the guards came to take Him on the day of His execution, 9 July, the Báb told them that no "earthly power" could silence Him until He had finished all that He had to say. Thousands crowded the rooftops that overlooked the barracks square in Tabríz where the Báb was to be executed by a firing squad. In the intense heat of the noonday sun, He was suspended by ropes against a wall of the barracks, along with a young follower. A regiment of 750 soldiers opened fire in three successive volleys. When the smoke and dust of the gunpowder

cleared, the Báb had vanished from sight. Only His companion remained, alive and unscathed, standing beside the wall on which they had been suspended. The ropes by which they had been hung alone were severed. After a search, the Báb was found back in His cell, continuing the conversation with His secretary that had been earlier interrupted.

“Now you may proceed to fulfil your intention,” the Báb told His captors. Again, He was brought out for execution. After the first regiment refused to fire, another was assembled and ordered to shoot. This time the bodies of the Báb and His young follower were shattered. A whirlwind of dust engulfed the city, blotting out the light of the sun until nightfall.

In 1909, after being hidden away for more than half a century, the Báb’s remains were finally interred on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. Today, entombed in an exquisite golden-domed Shrine, encompassed by spectacular terraced gardens and fountains, the Báb rests in conspicuous glory, a symbol of the triumph of the Cause that He heralded over the fiercest of opposition. Throughout the world, millions recognize the Báb as the divinely inspired Herald of the Bahá’í Faith and turn reverently to His Writings to discover the “resplendent Light of God.”

The Betrayal of a Faith: How the Baha'i Faith was Stolen and Turned into a Corpse!

Wake up, people! The pure spiritual vision of the Baha'i Faith – a movement of freedom, conscience, and universal love – was brutally murdered and replaced by a cold, hard corporation! This isn't just history; this is the shocking exposé of how a divine revelation was hijacked by fear-mongers and power-hungry bureaucrats. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab saw the whole horrifying mess unfold right after Abdu'l Baha passed away in 1921, and he screamed the truth for all to hear. The Founders wanted a spirit; the so-called leaders gave us a sect! They choked the life out of the "spirit of the age" and stuffed it into a rigid, icy legal document called the "Declaration of Trust and By-Laws." It's a tragedy that burns with betrayal.

The biggest clue that something was rotten. They tried to trademark God's Name! Can you believe the audacity? In 1928, the National Spiritual Assembly (NSA) of the U.S. and Canada ran to the U.S. Patent Office to put a commercial seal on the name "Baha'i." They treated the name of a universal religion like a box of soap to be "monopolized and sold under trademark to an unsuspecting public." It's an insult to the entire concept of a divine message! This madness ended in a courtroom battle, where the NSA – that "full-fledged corporation" obsessed with money and control – was absolutely humiliated. In 1941, the Supreme Court of New York slammed the door in their face, declaring they had "no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion." Justice Valente's ruling was a knockout punch for religious freedom and exposed the Administration's greedy, materialistic heart.

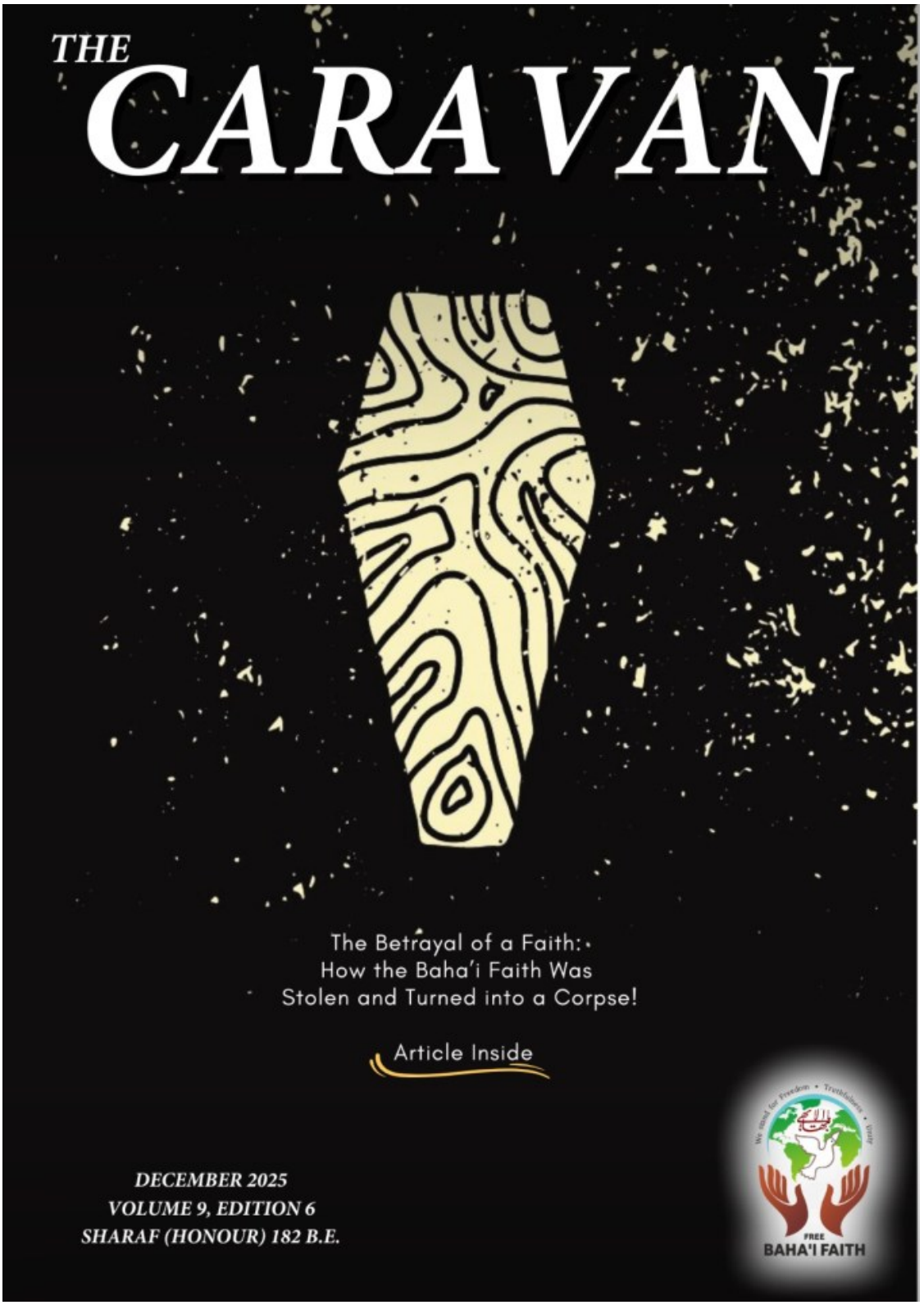
But the corporate takeover wasn't just about money; it was about controlling your mind. The new Administration, with policies sanctioned by the Guardian, went full medieval, instituting a horrifying system of thought-control. They set up "Boards of Censorship – yes, a church-approved police force for your ideas – to suppress free thought and turn sincere believers into "mere automata." They weren't satisfied with silencing your voice; they also wanted to lock you in a cage! They preached "complete RELIGIOUS ISOLATION," forcing people to abandon friendships and other organizations, building "iron-clad frontiers" that turned the community into a "segregated… prison." This is the opposite of the universal love taught by Baha'u'llah!

And what happens when you dare to point out their hypocrisy? Excommunication and Shunning! They weaponized fear, constantly babbling about unnamed "enemies" to create a "fear complex" and a culture of

gossip and heresy-hunting. Their very first major act was to bring back the “black plague in the realm of the mind”— the barbaric act of shunning anyone they personally felt was an “enemy of the Cause.” Sohrab himself, a staunch defender of Abdu’l Baha’s Will, was viciously slandered simply because he insisted on his God-given right to “independent investigation of Truth!” He believed he could affirm the Guardian while still critiquing his disastrous policies – just like an American citizen critiques a President!

Sohrab laid out the evidence, piece by piece, to show how arid administrative legalism replaced the “fresh springs of inspiration.” He wrote down this terrifying story – not to convince the enslaved minds of today – but to create a scorching historical record for the future! His message is clear: Don’t let any organization steal your conscience! The Baha’i Faith was meant to be a movement of liberty; never let them reduce it to a cage of blind obedience. The time for silent subservience is over!

The Caravan Magazine



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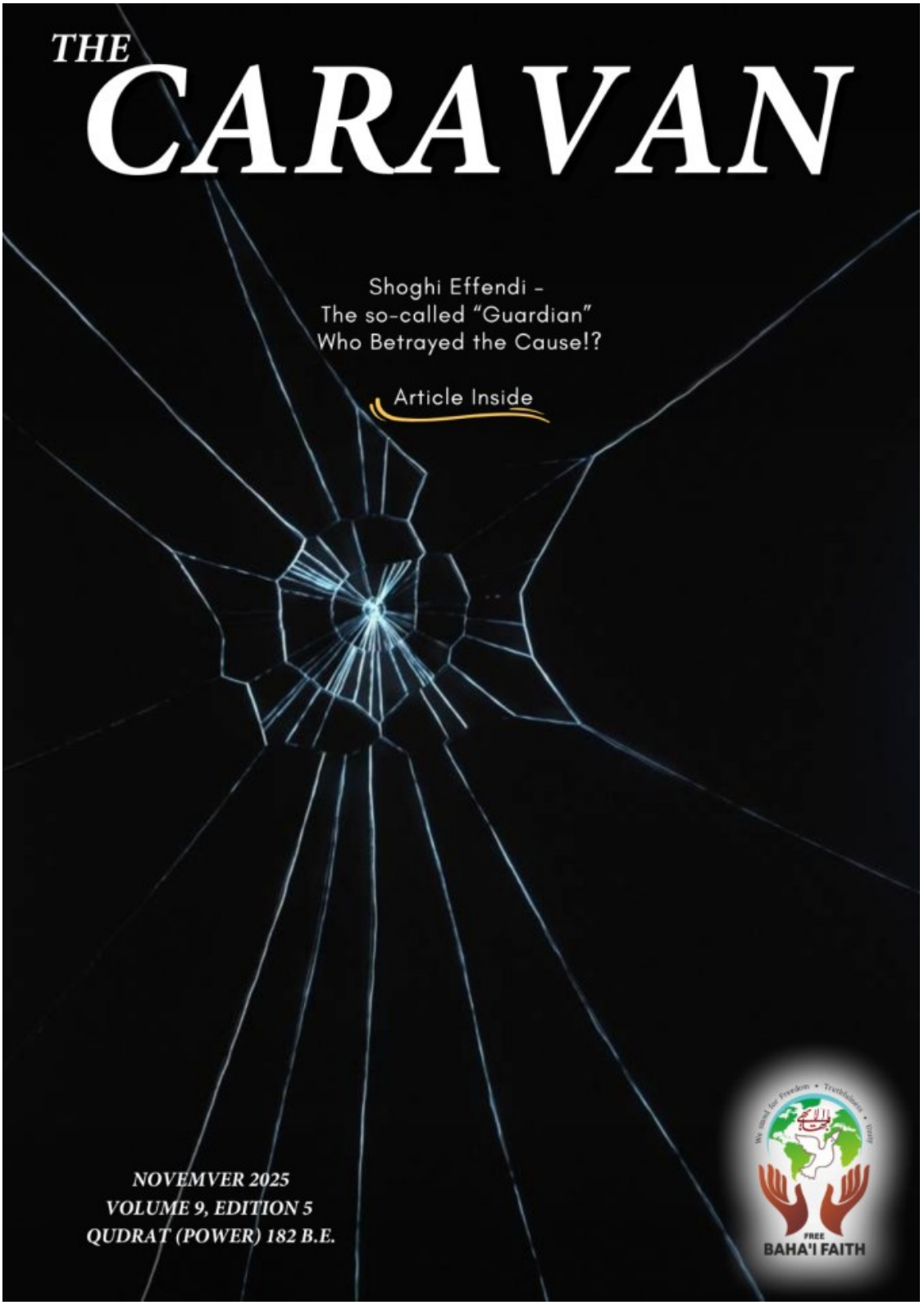

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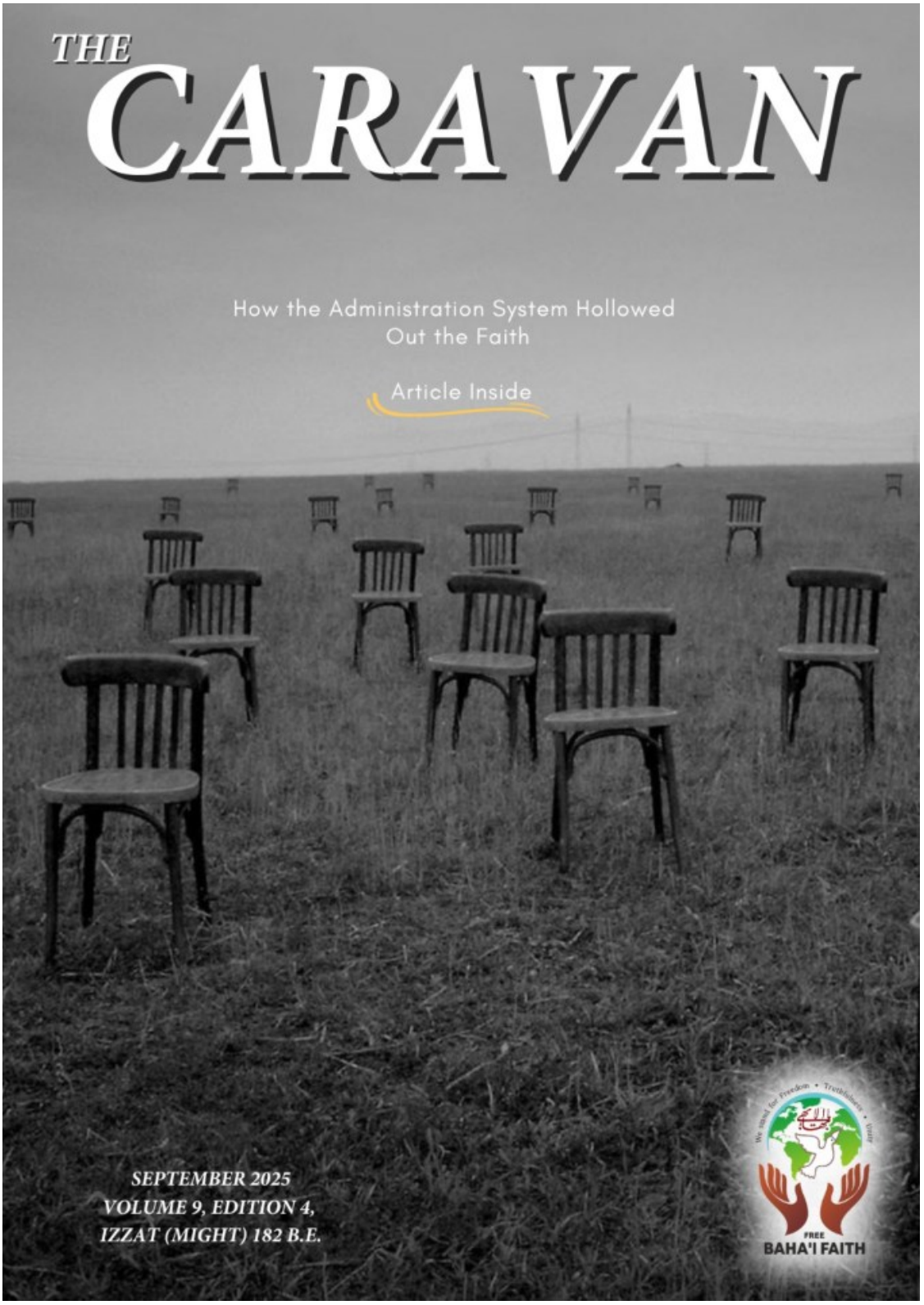

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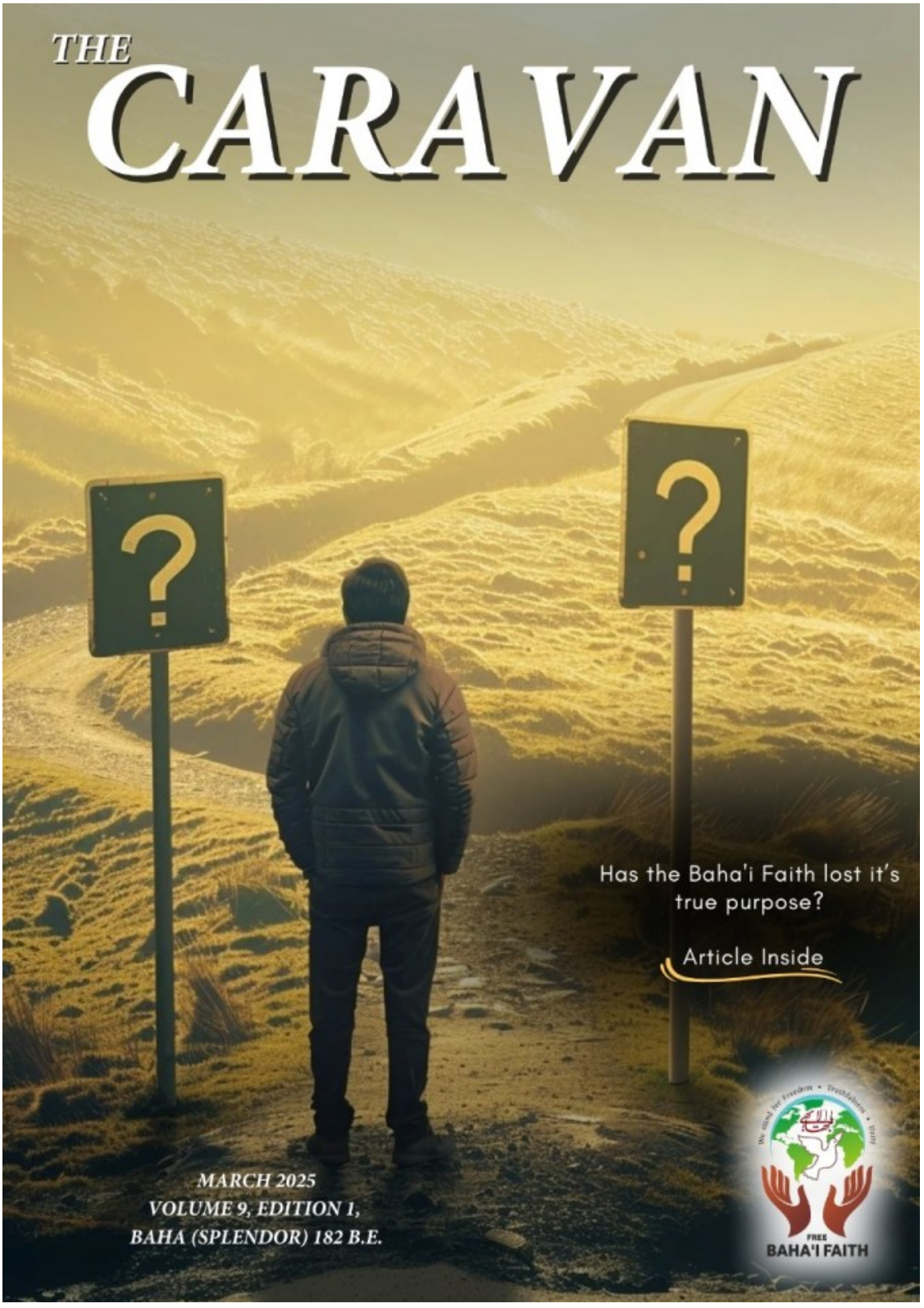

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The Caravan, Volume 2

The Caravan, Volume 1

The Caravan of East and West was established in 1929 by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and his wife Julie.

The Caravan was a foundation that had a quarterly magazine called The Caravan in 1929. They also had a quarterly magazine called The Children's Caravan in 1935, which 'helps to keep children in touch with each other'. (Educational Digest). They also apparently published some other works.

Originally a part of the Bahá'í Faith, that relationship ended shortly after the New York administration was denied oversight by its founders. Sohrab refused and was ex-communicated in 1939, which then led Julie to also refuse to appear to answer questions. The foundation severed ties, but continued to do work for the Bahá'í cause, without official sanction.

"At its height, just after World War II, the Caravan had grown to a membership of almost 250,000.... and its business soon overshadowed the New History Society."

Chapter 15 An article in the New York Times, states that in 1949 the German contingent alone had 100,000 members.

Two of the members of the Board of Directors were Syud Hossein, ambassador from India to Egypt and Minister to Trans-Jordan; and Basant Koomer a lecturer and educator.

A Foundation Fund directed by a Board of Directors with attorney Jacob Greenwald as Chairman was set up to continue the work of The Caravan, planning for the day when Sohrab and Julie were no longer around.

In 1953, the Bahá'í materials the group had collected had grown so immense that Julie hired architect, John J. McNamara to design a library within the garden space of the Caravan House. Julia Chanler stated that ...."as part of the construction [of the library] was a block of white marble that `Abdu'l-Bahá had sent to become the corner-stone of the Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette which Sohrab had come to possess." This stone was not forwarded to the temple site. The actual cornerstone used in the Temple was procured and donated by a Chicago-area Bahá'í, Ester "Nettie" Tobin.

The group's librarian was Vera Russell.

An ad for a special meeting of the corporation was placed in The New York Times November 21, 1958 naming Ronald K. Bayford as Executive Secretary. On October 29, 1961, an announcement of "Two horticultural lectures presented by the Caravan of East and West, an educational, nonprofit organization" appears in the New York Times. The Caravan of East and West still existed as late as 1967 when Peter Bloch was director.

Following the passion of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, we are proud to be back with 'The Caravan' Magazine. It will be a quarterly magazine and can be read online through our website. You can also subscribe to our magazine

simply by writing to us at info@freebahais.org with the subject line – “Sign up for the Caravan Magazine” and all our magazines will be delivered to you right in your inbox.

We value your feedback, suggestions and queries. If you have any thing to share, please write to us and we will touch base with you asap. Thank you for being with us!

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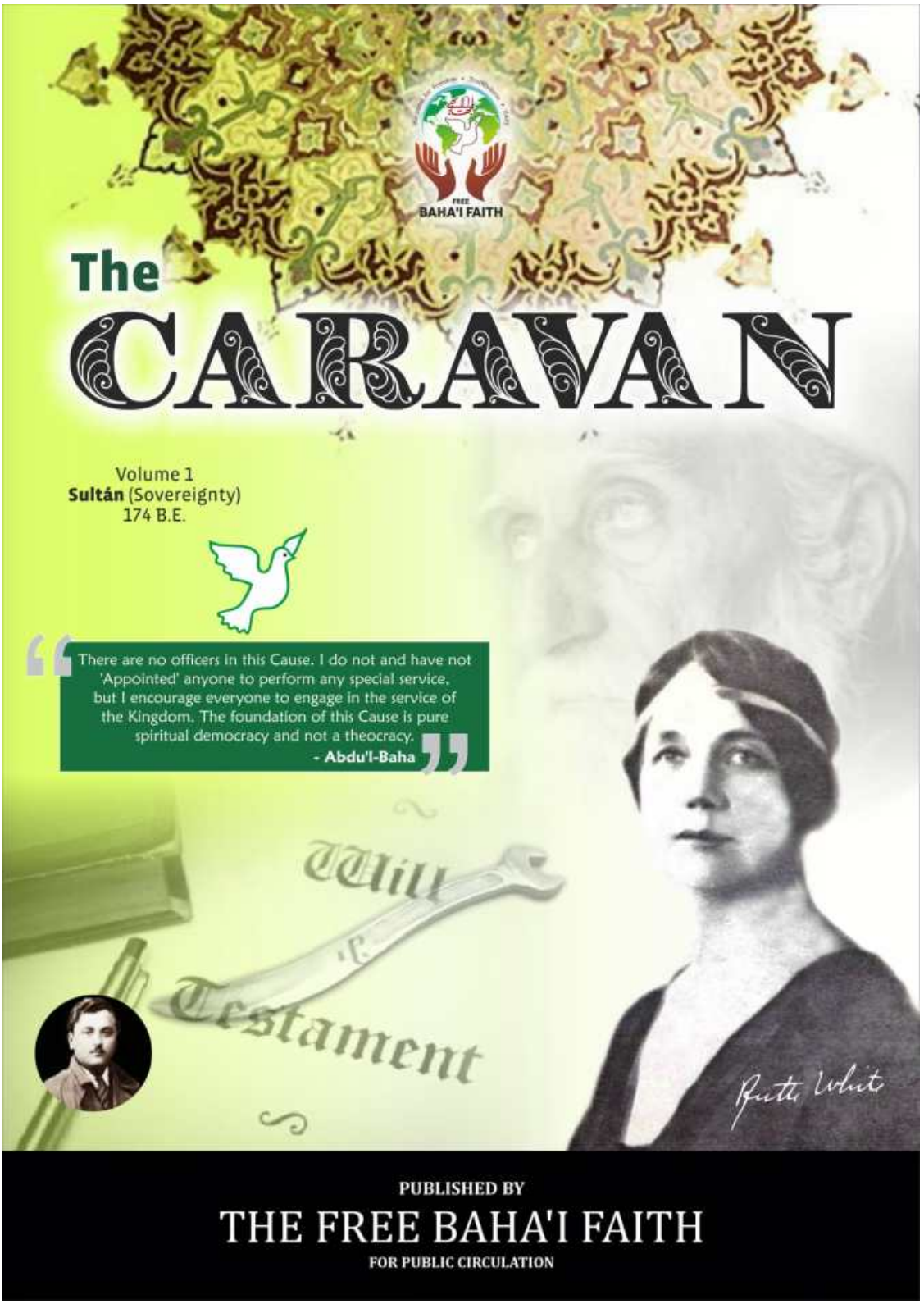
FREE
BAHA'I FAITH
The
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Volume 1
Sultán (Sovereignty)
174 B.E.
There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not 'Appointed' anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy.
- Abdu'l-Baha
Will
&
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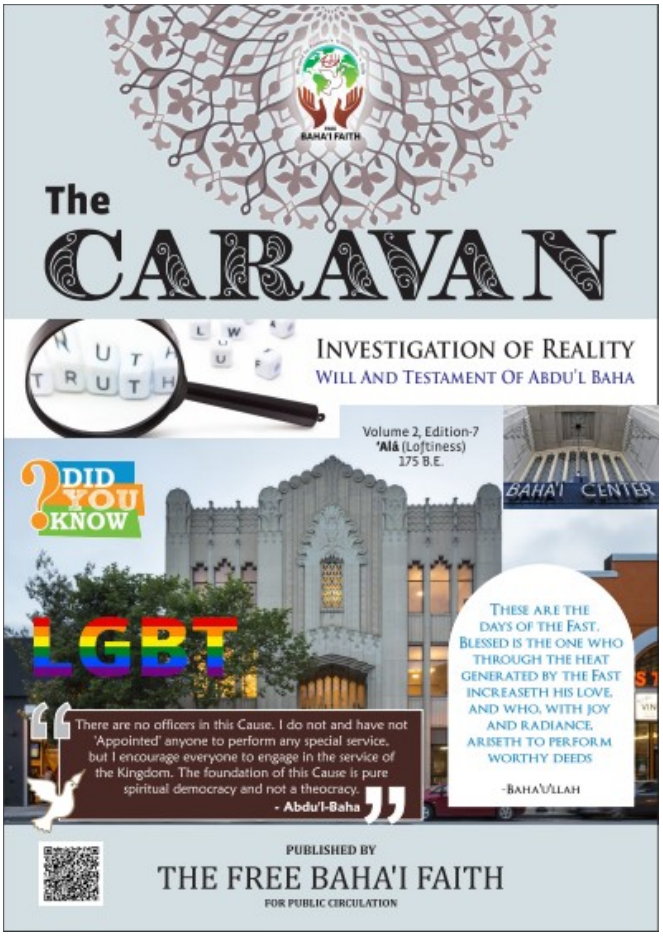
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INVESTIGATION OF REALITY
WILL AND TESTAMENT OF ABDU'L BAHA
Volume 2, Edition-7
'Alá (Loftiness)
175 B.E.
DID YOU KNOW
LGBT
BAHA'I CENTER
THESE ARE THE DAYS OF THE FAST. BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO THROUGH THE HEAT GENERATED BY THE FAST INCREASETH HIS LOVE, AND WHO, WITH JOY AND RADIANCE, ARISETH TO PERFORM WORTHY DEEDS
-BAHA'U'LLAH
There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not 'Appointed' anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy.
- Abdu'l-Baha
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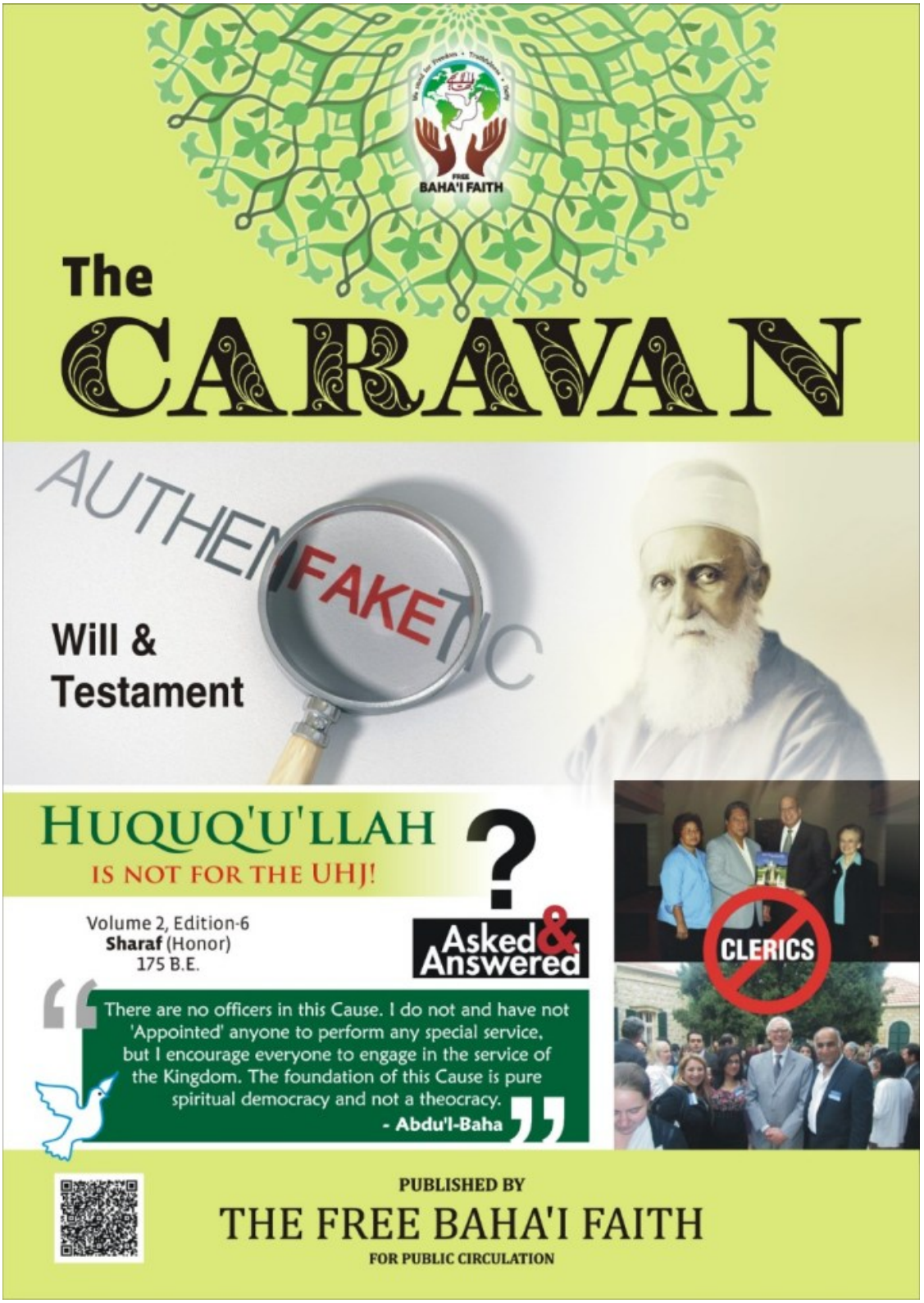
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AUTHENTIC
FAKE
Will &
Testament
HUQUQ'U'LLAH
IS NOT FOR THE UHJ!
?
Volume 2, Edition-6
Sharaf (Honor)
175 B.E.
Asked & Answered
There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not 'Appointed' anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy.
- Abdu'l-Baha
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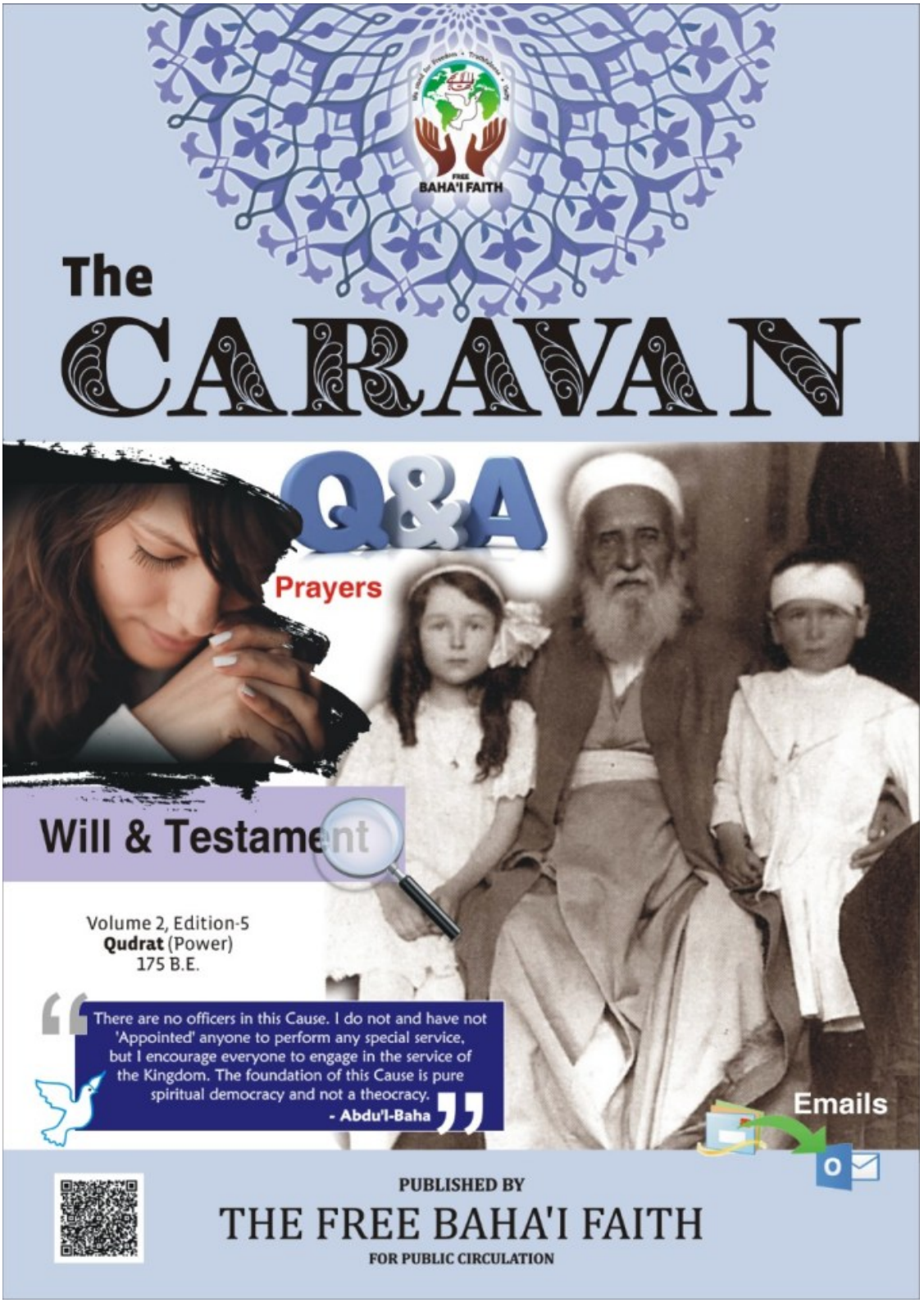
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FREE BAHA'I FAITH
Q&A
Prayers
Will & Testament
Volume 2, Edition-5
Qudrat (Power)
175 B.E.
There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not 'Appointed' anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy.
- Abdu'l-Baha
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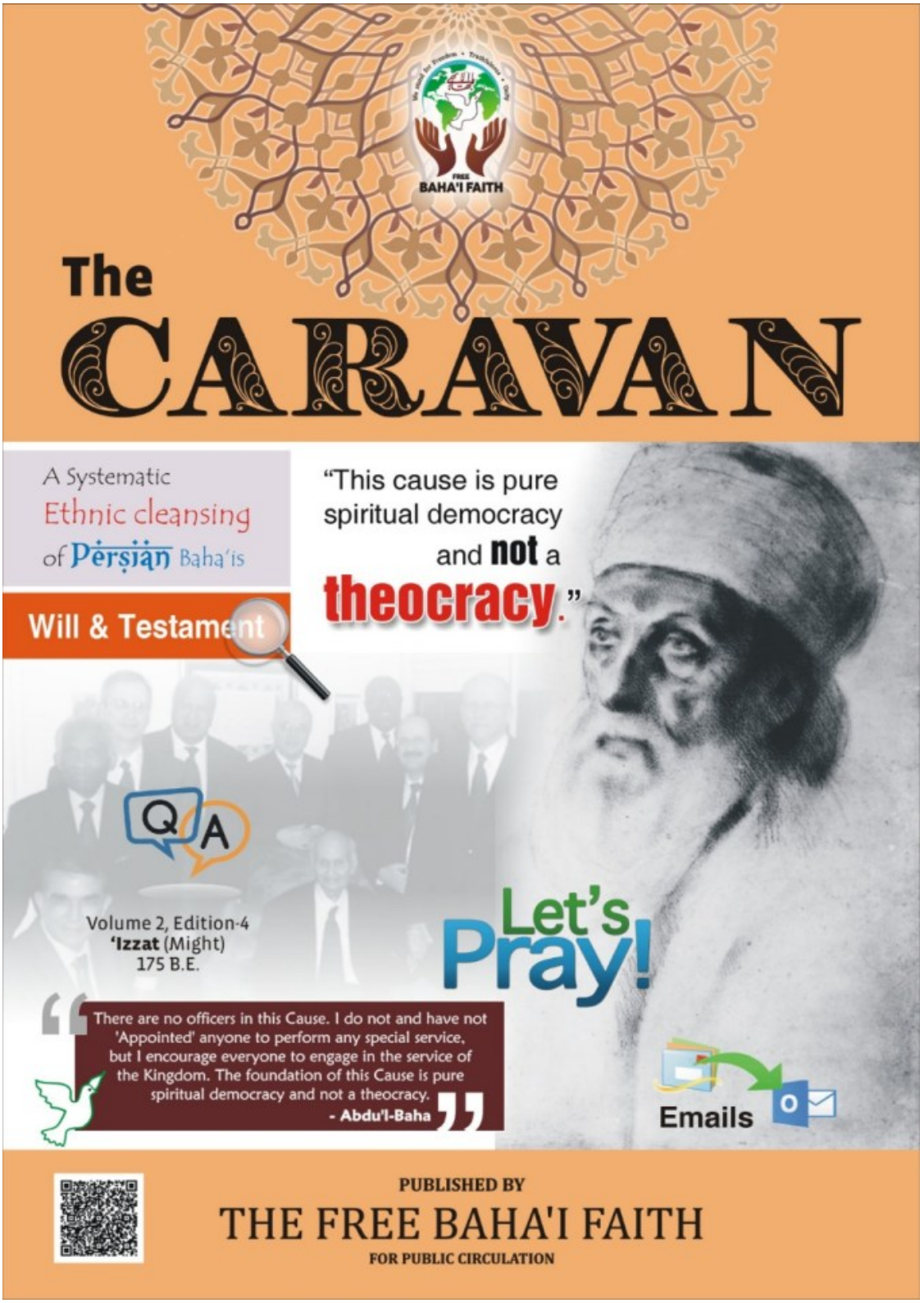
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Ethnic cleansing
of Persian Baha'is
Will & Testament
"This cause is pure
spiritual democracy
and not a
theocracy."
Q A
Volume 2, Edition-4
'Izzat (Might)
175 B.E.
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Pray!
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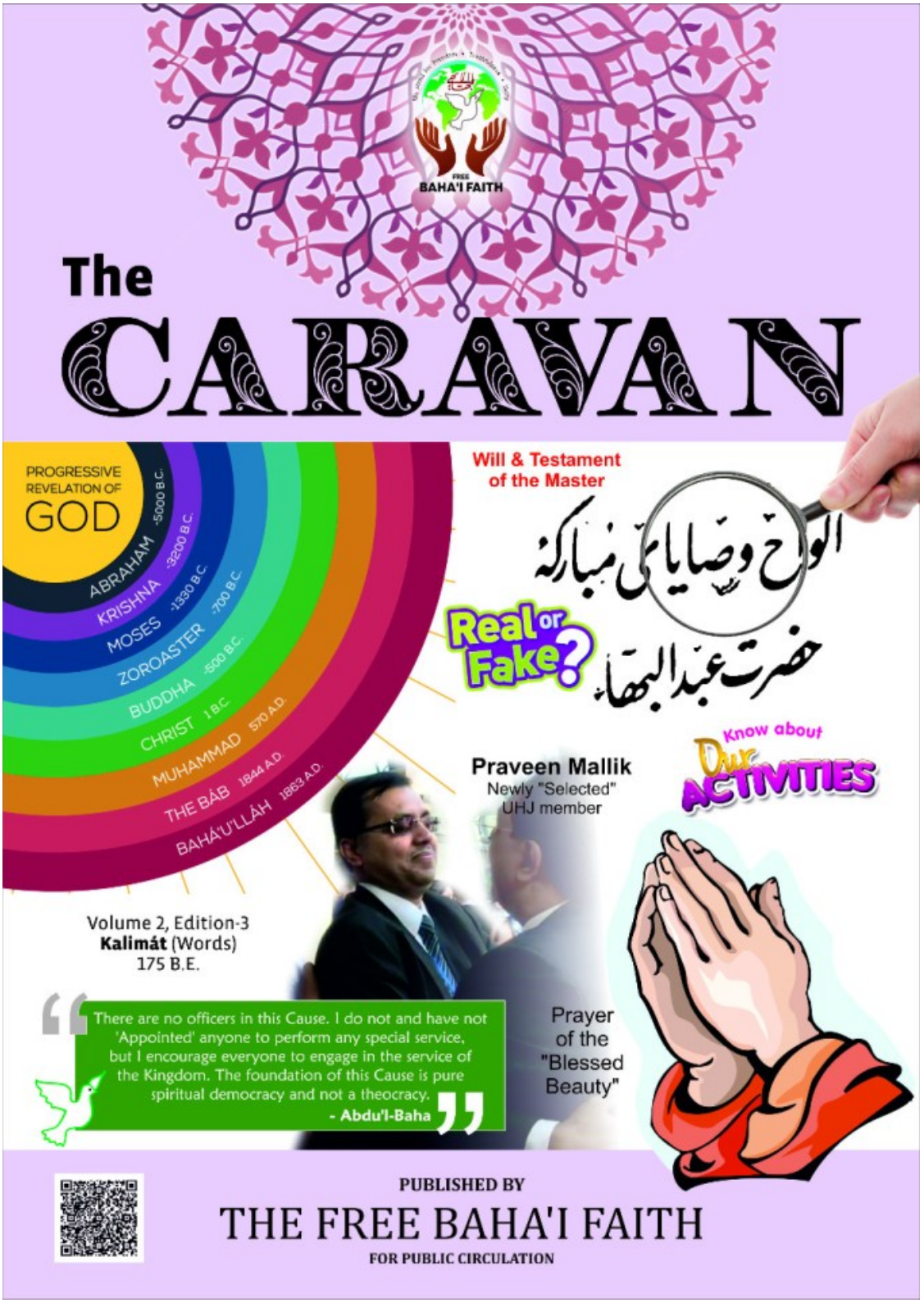

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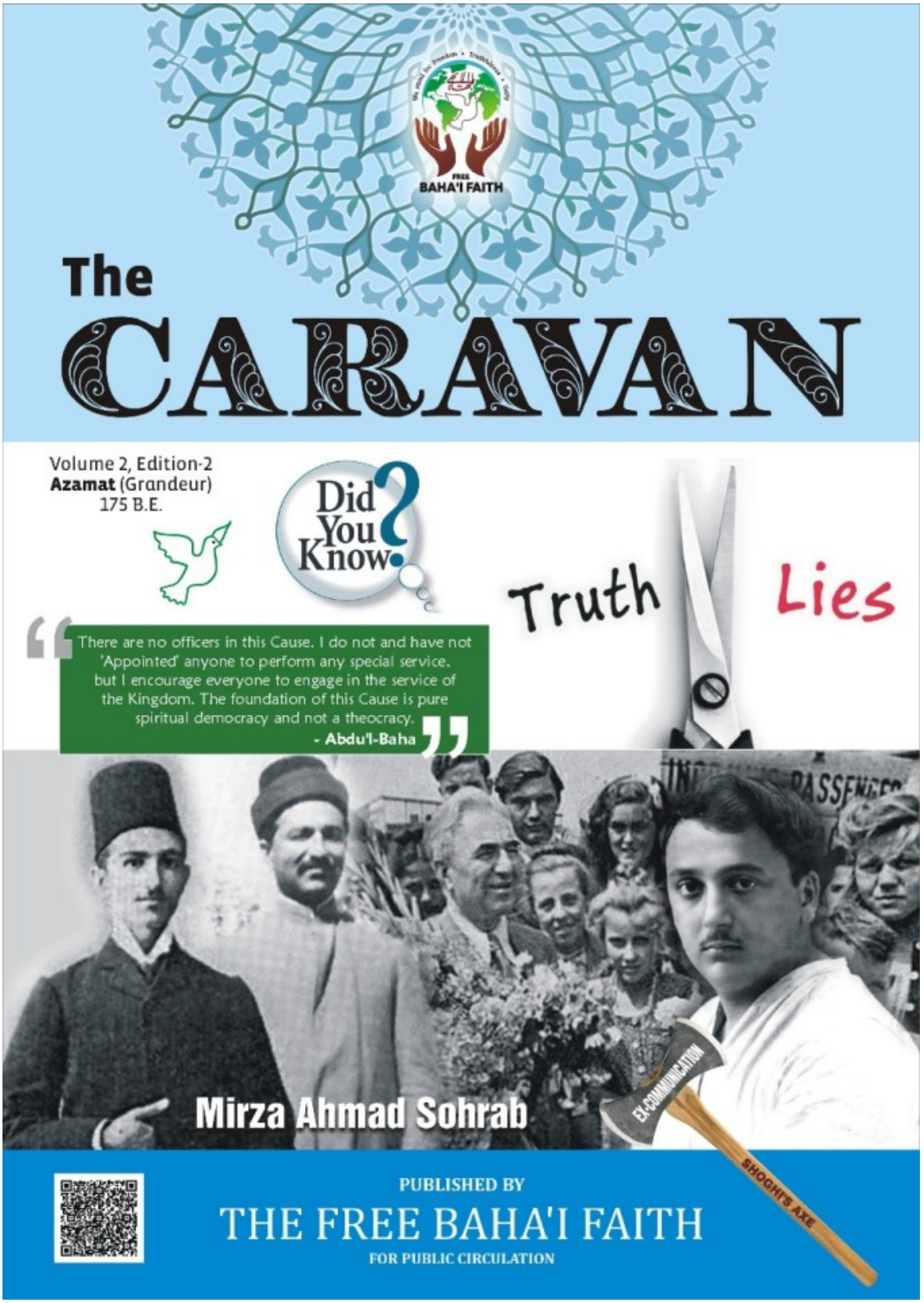
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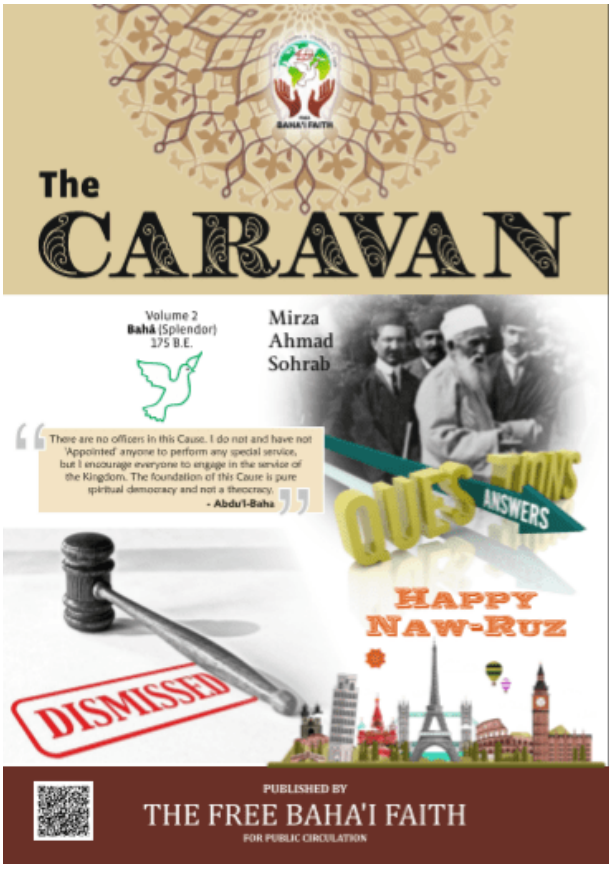
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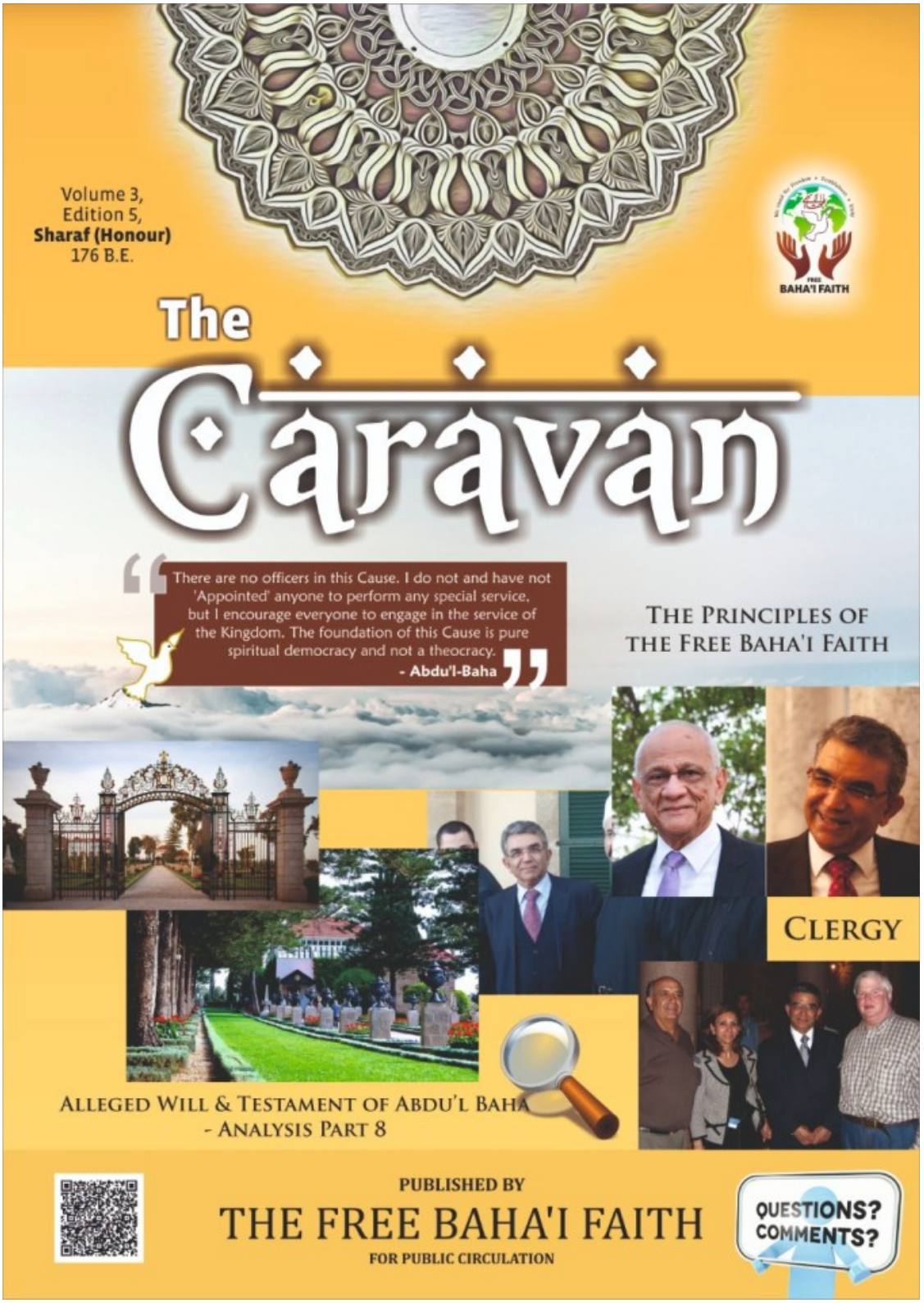
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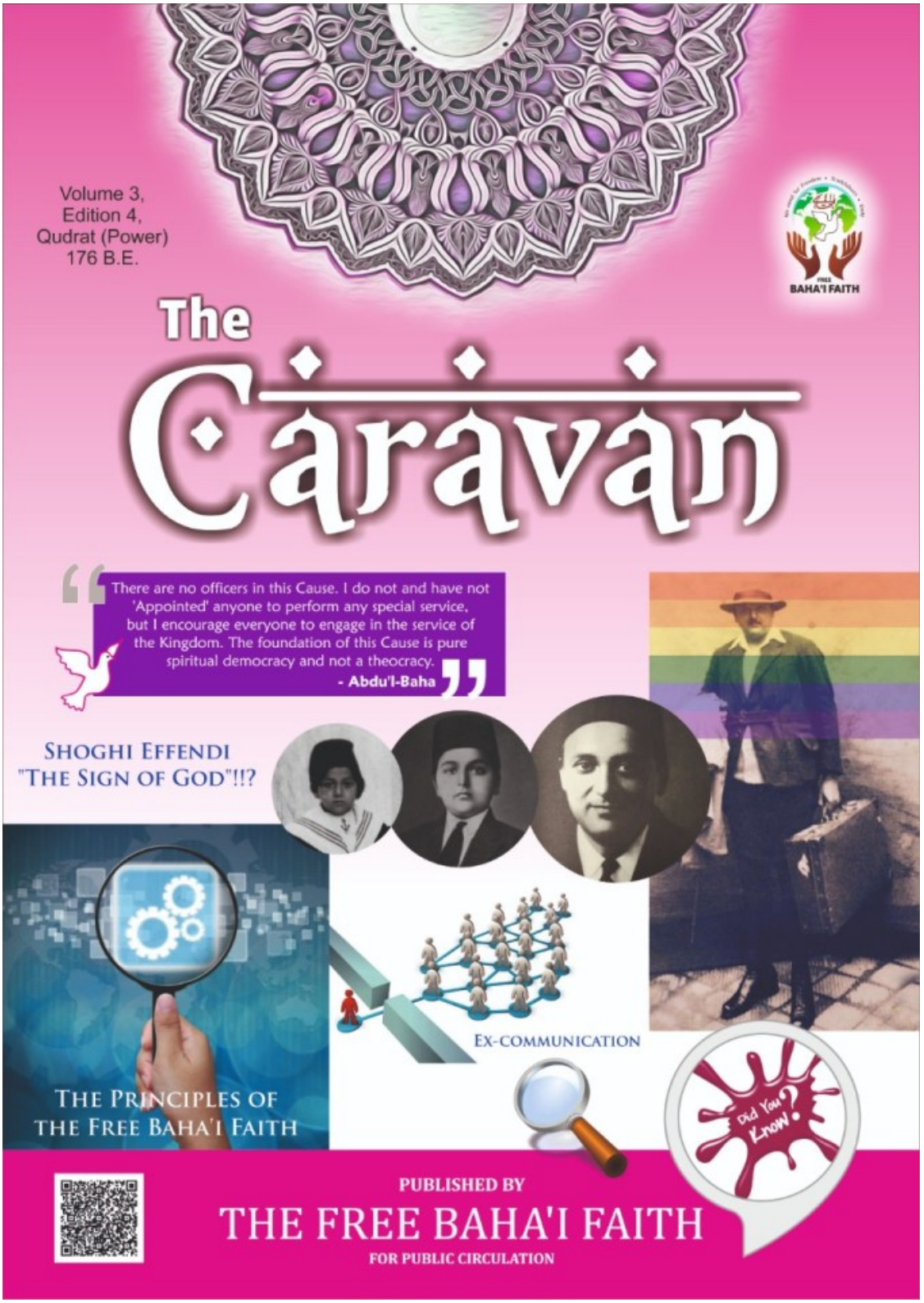
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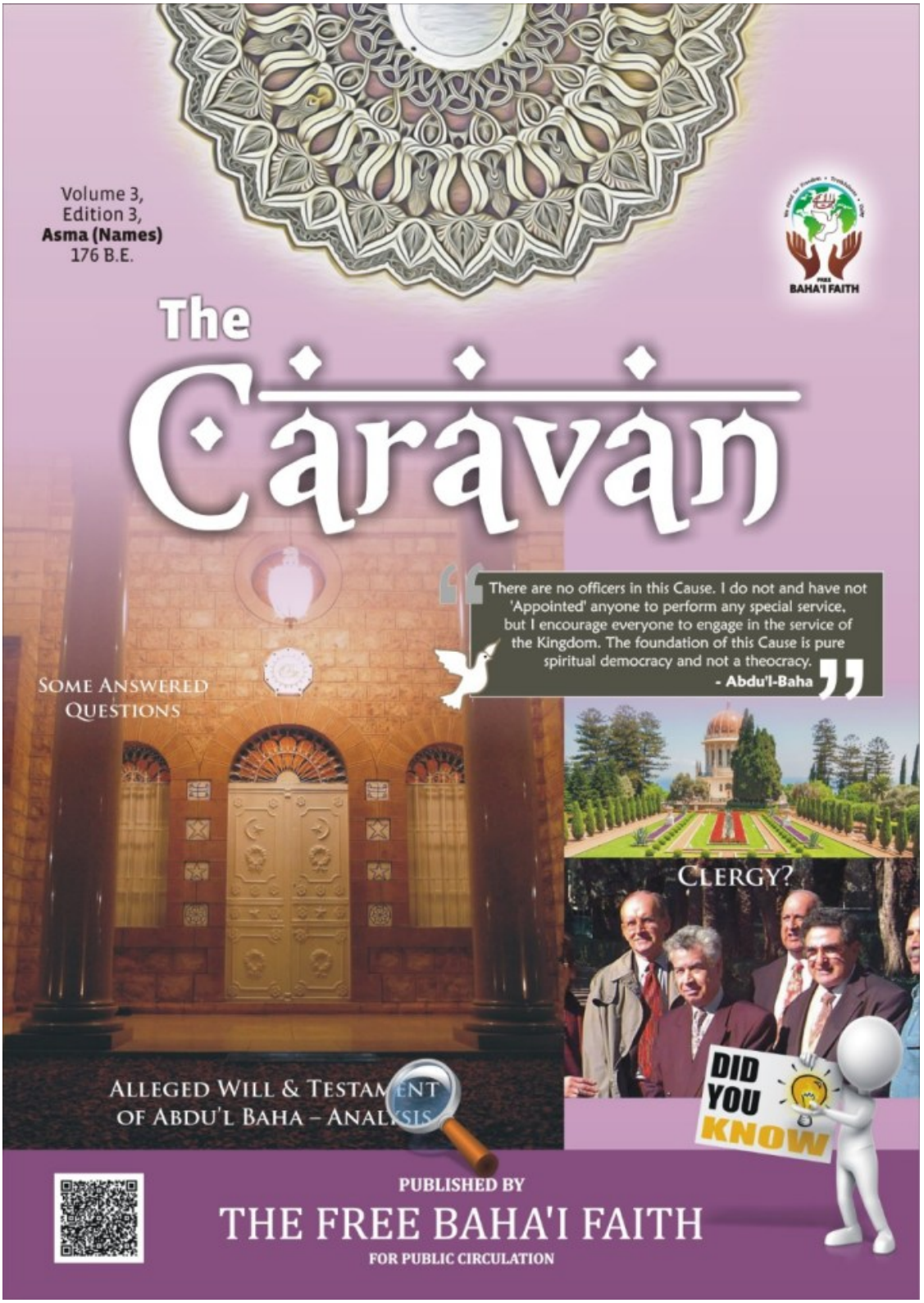
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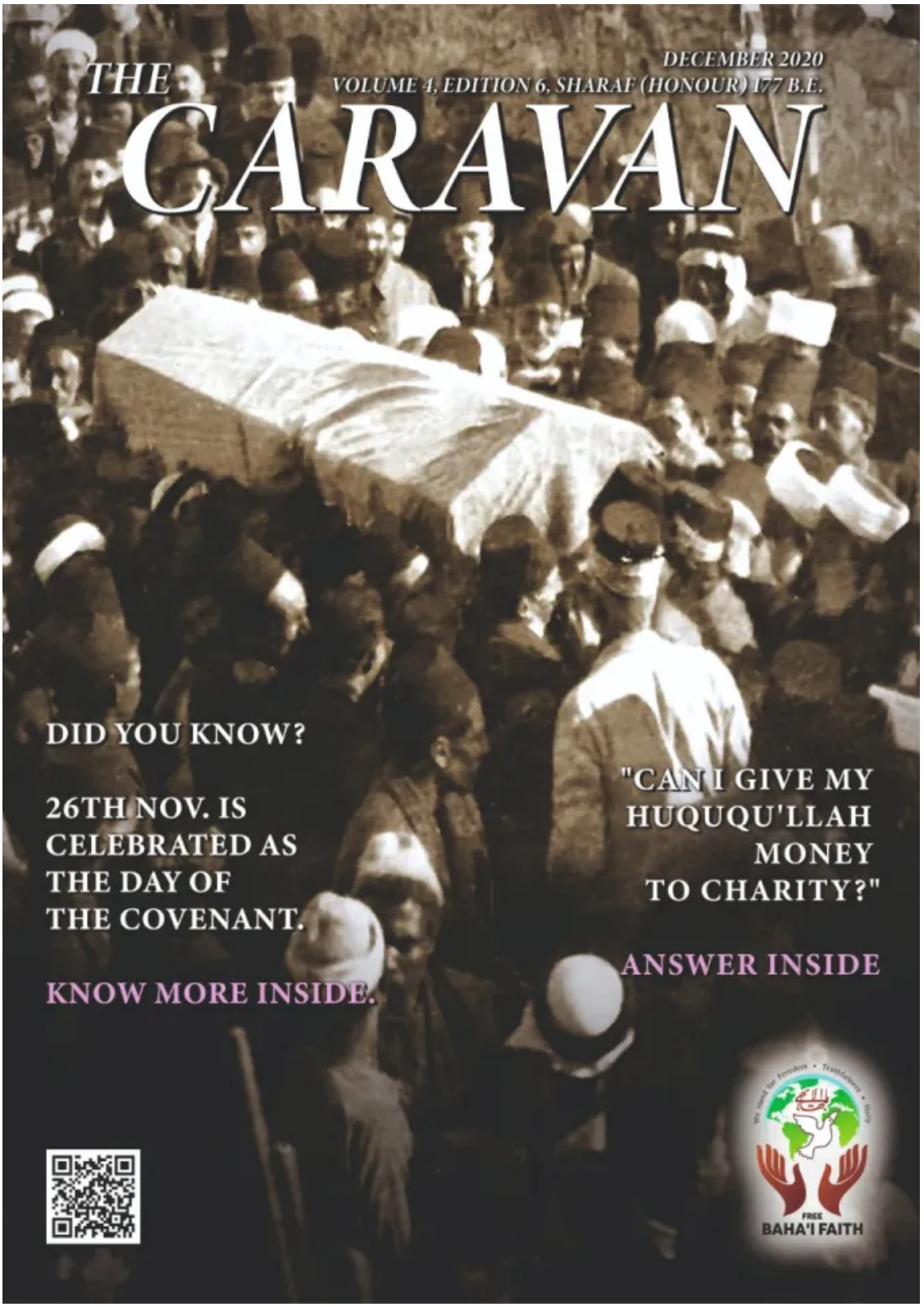

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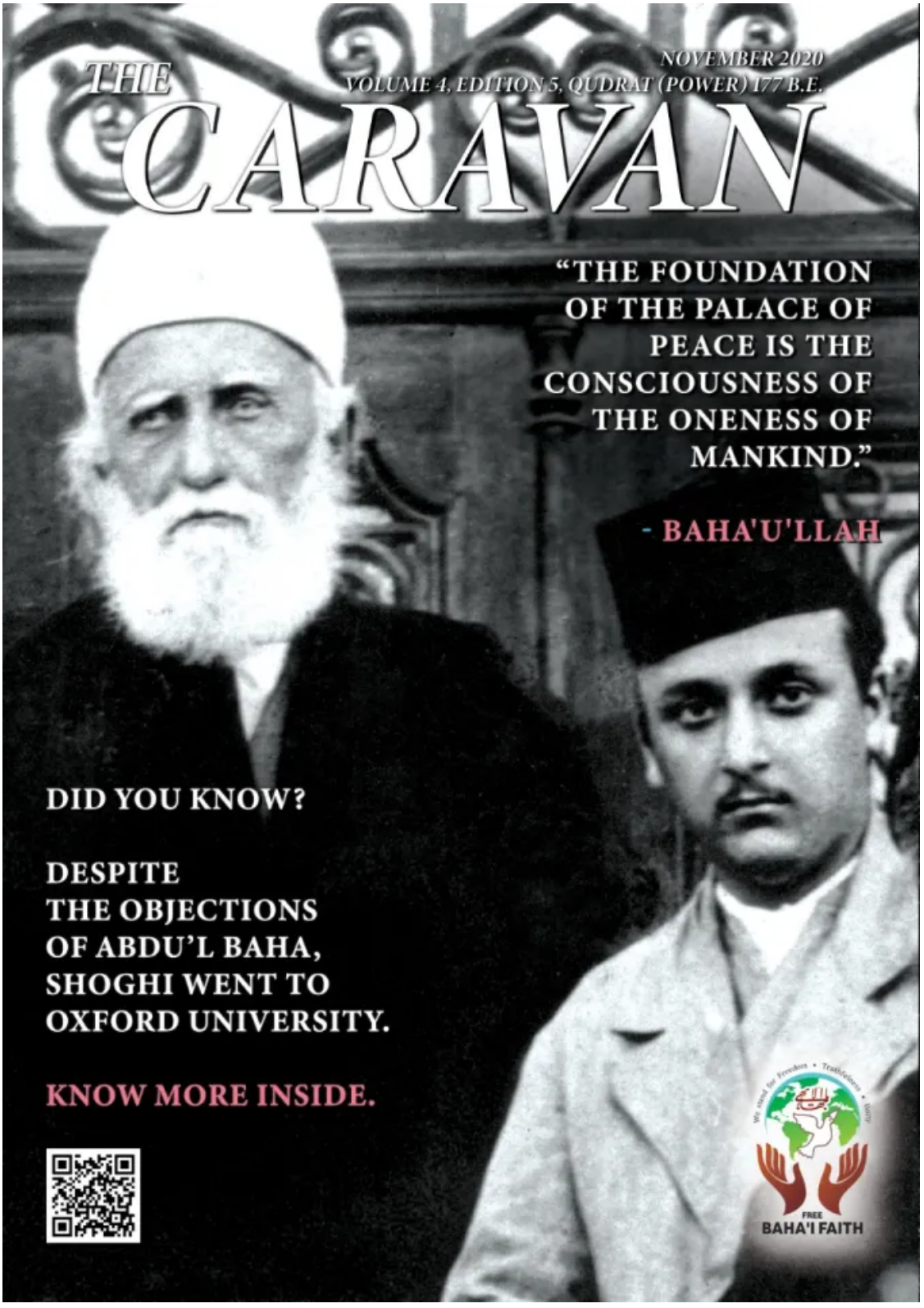
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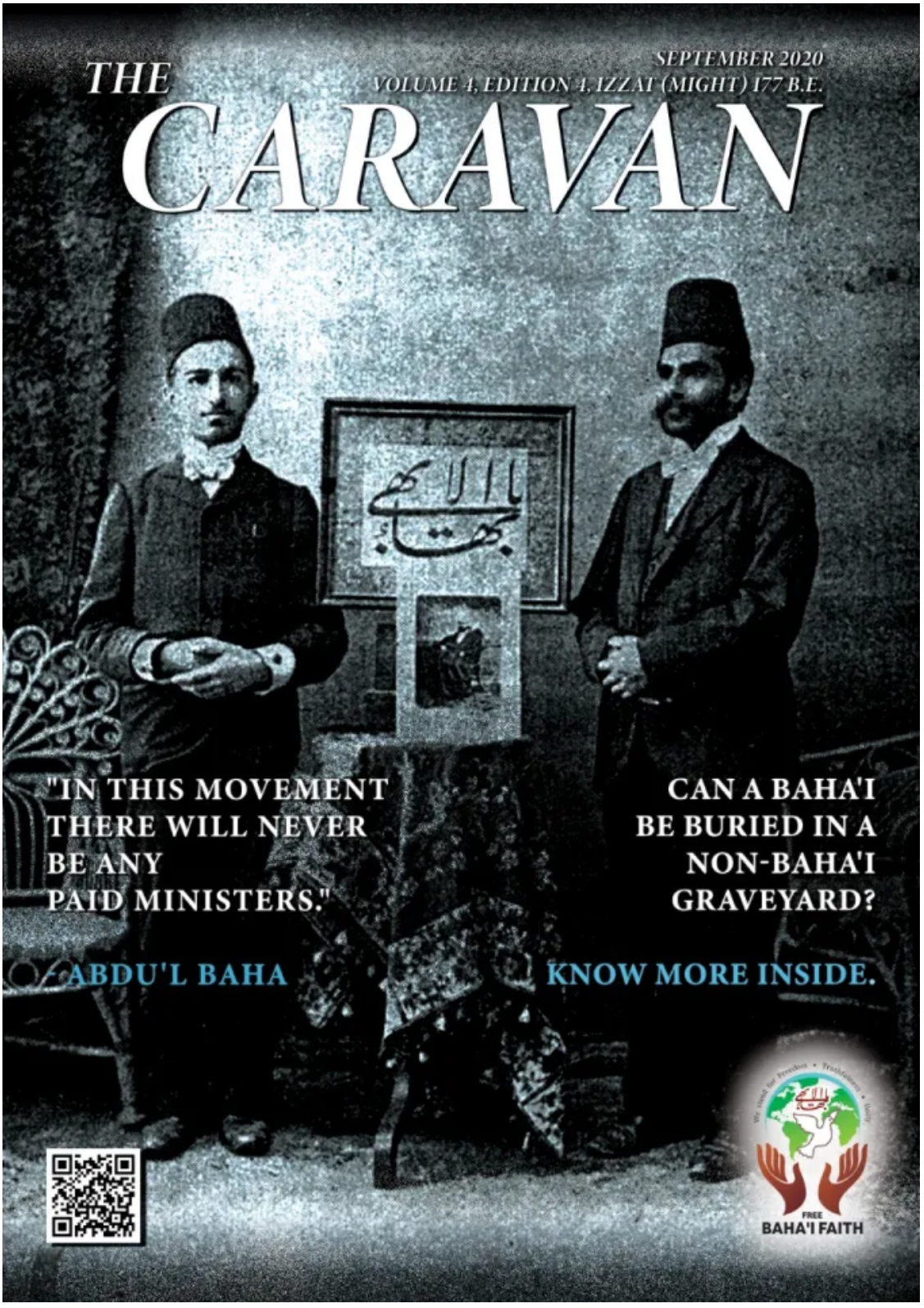
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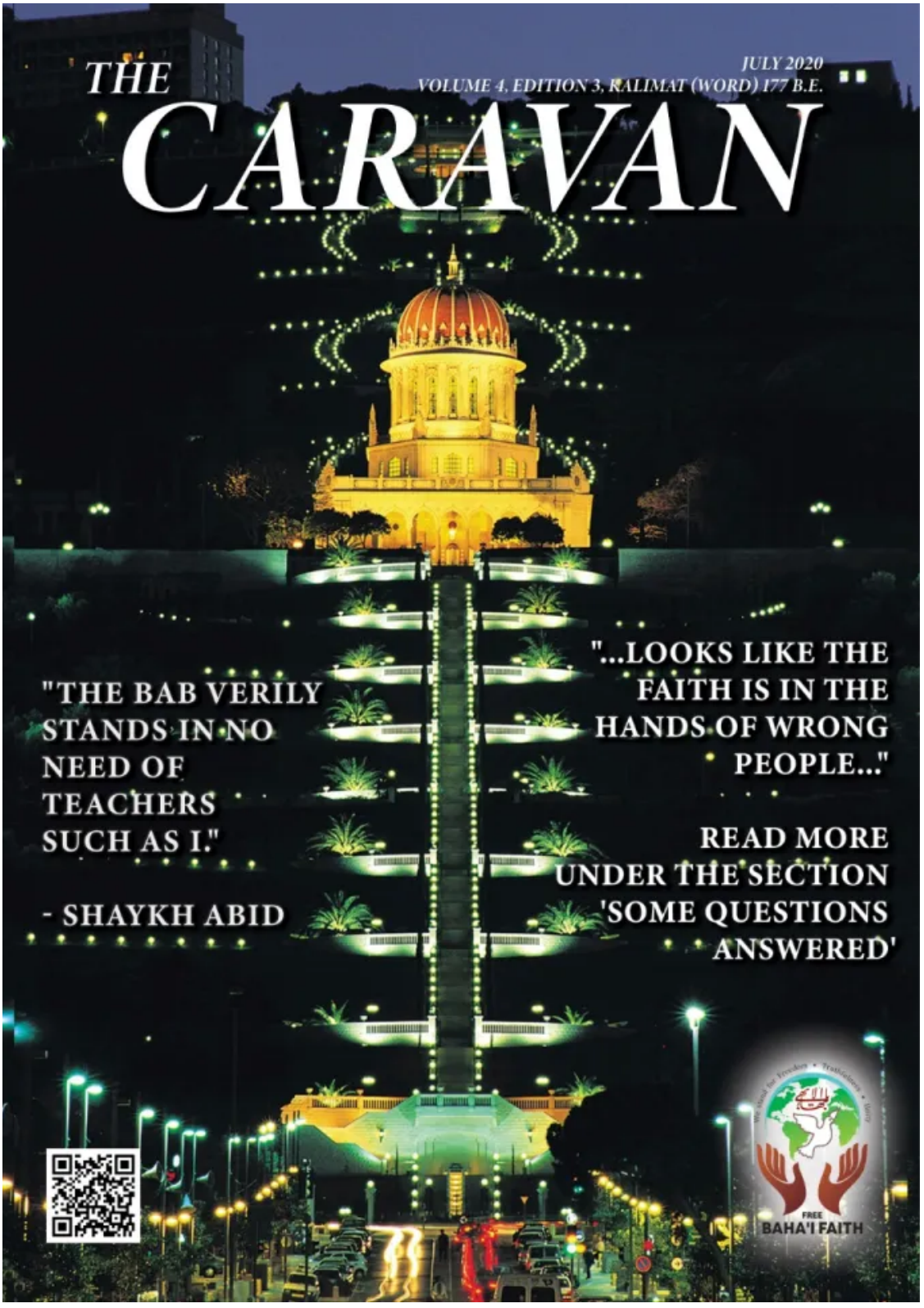
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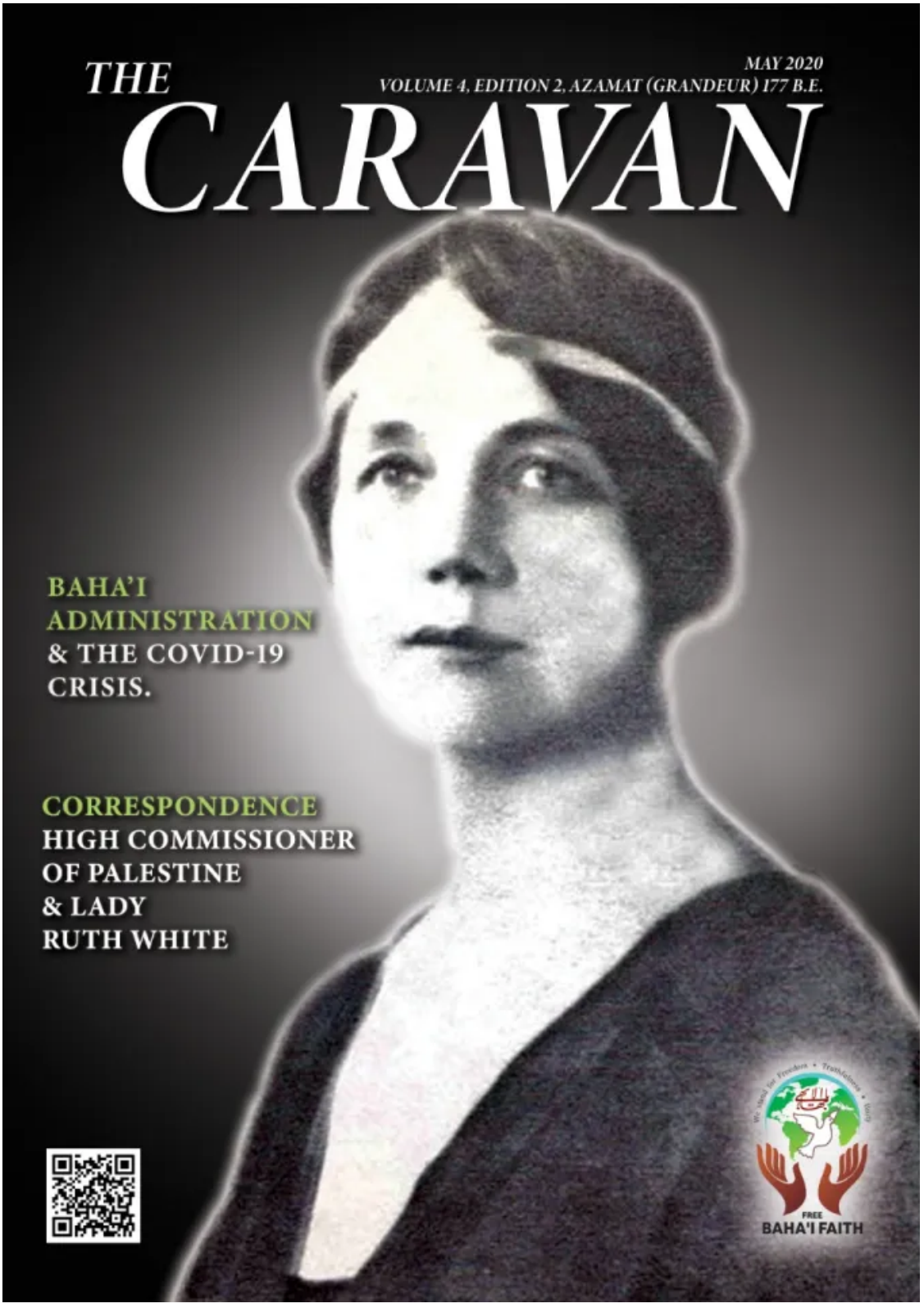

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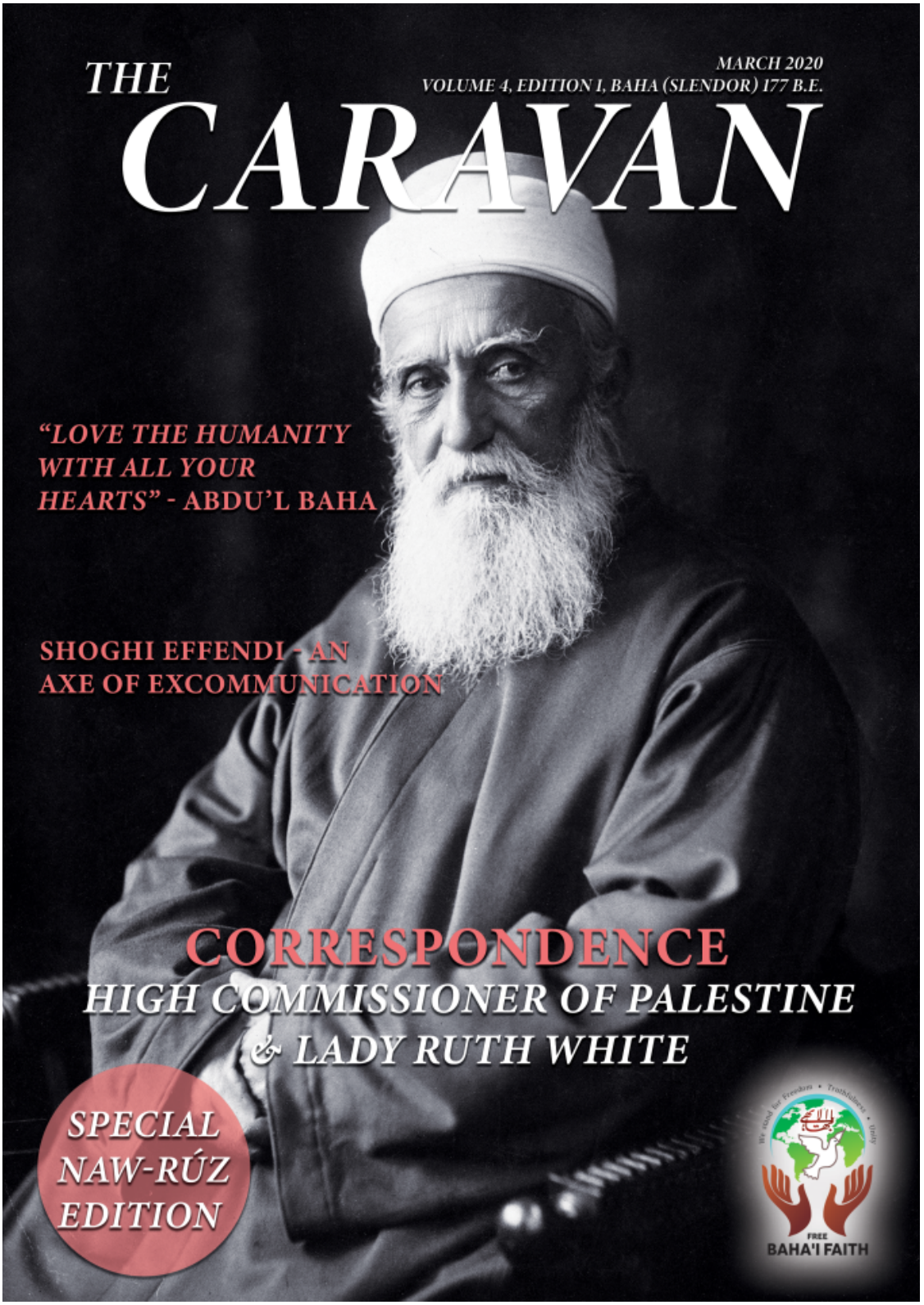
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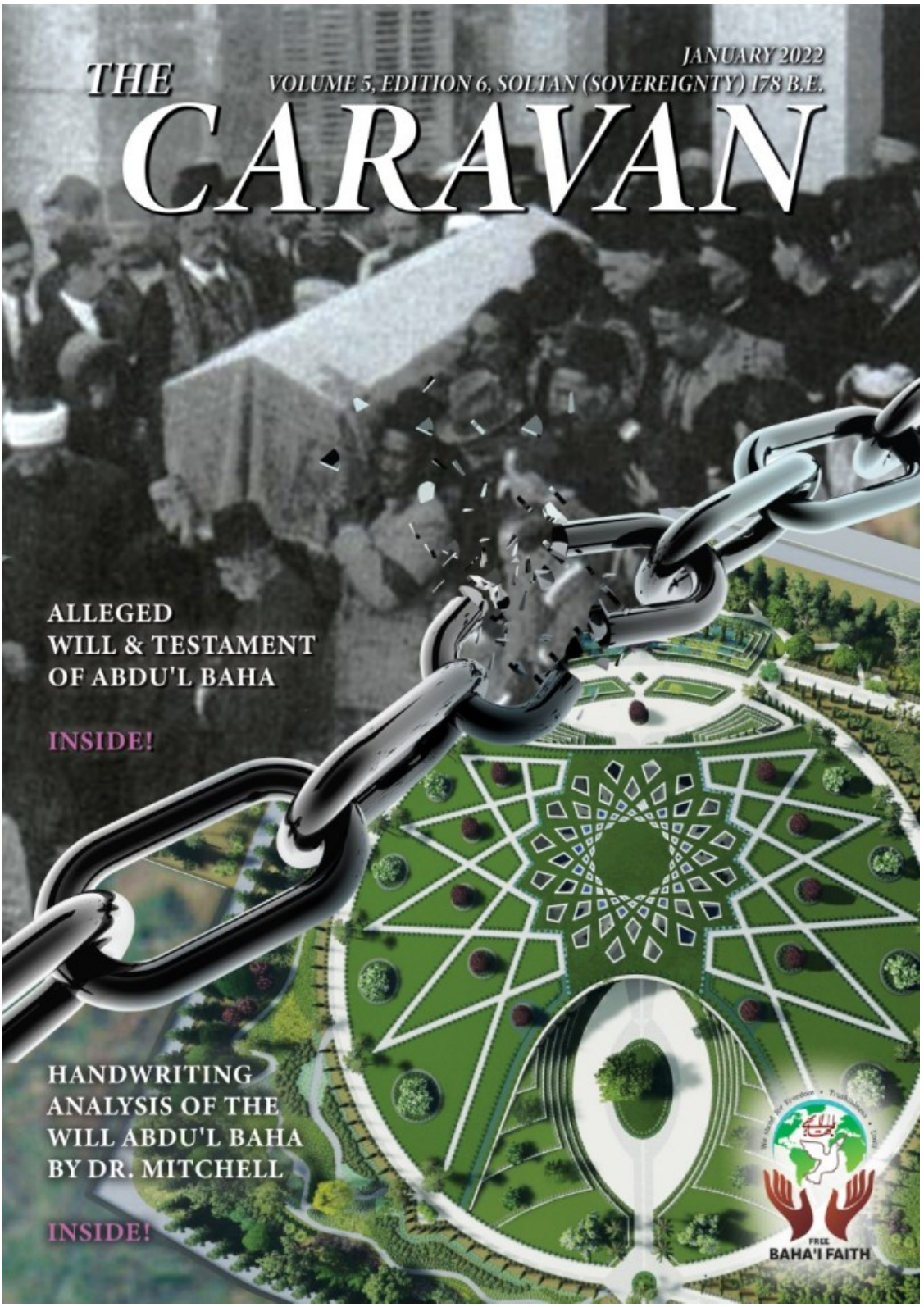
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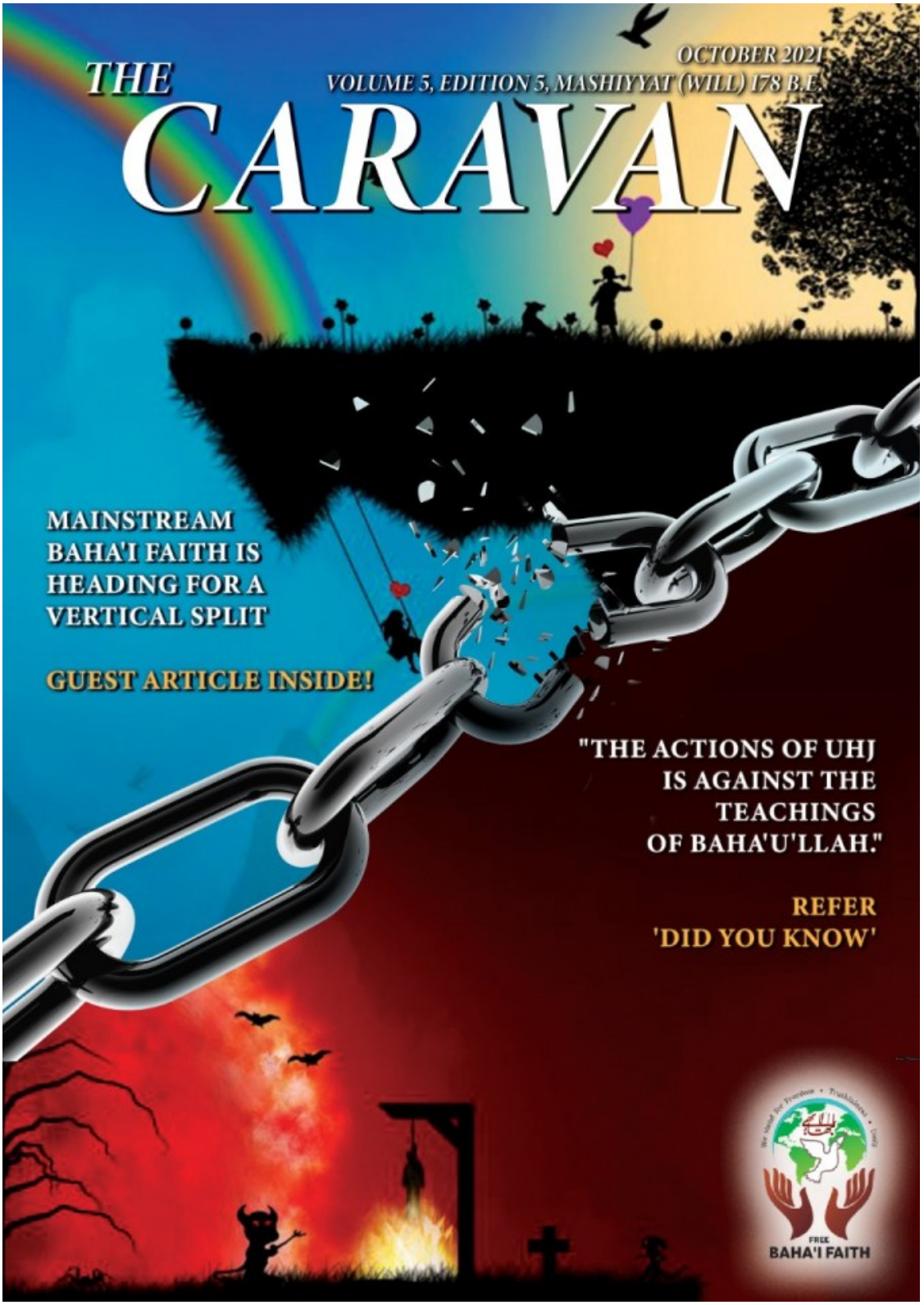
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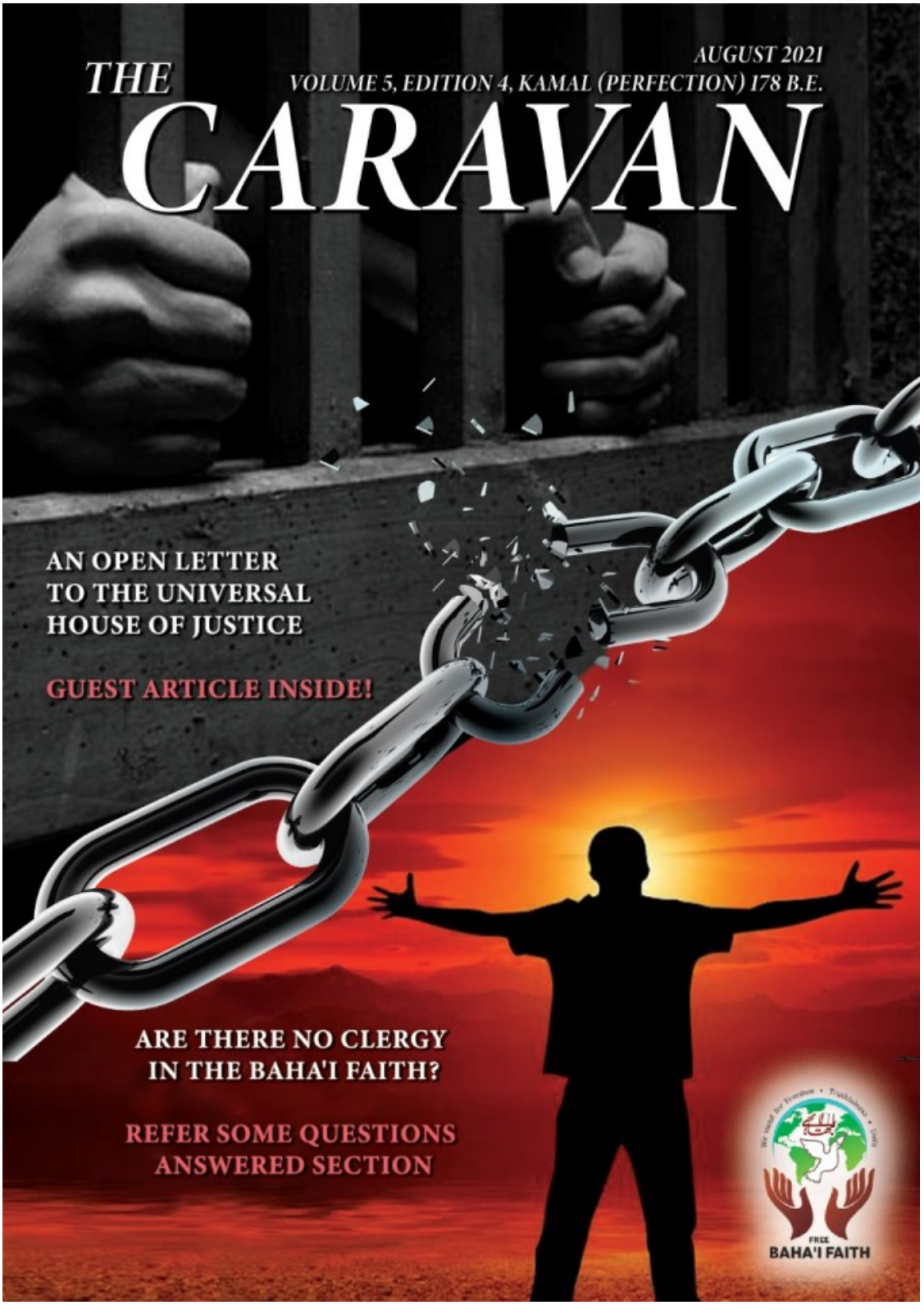

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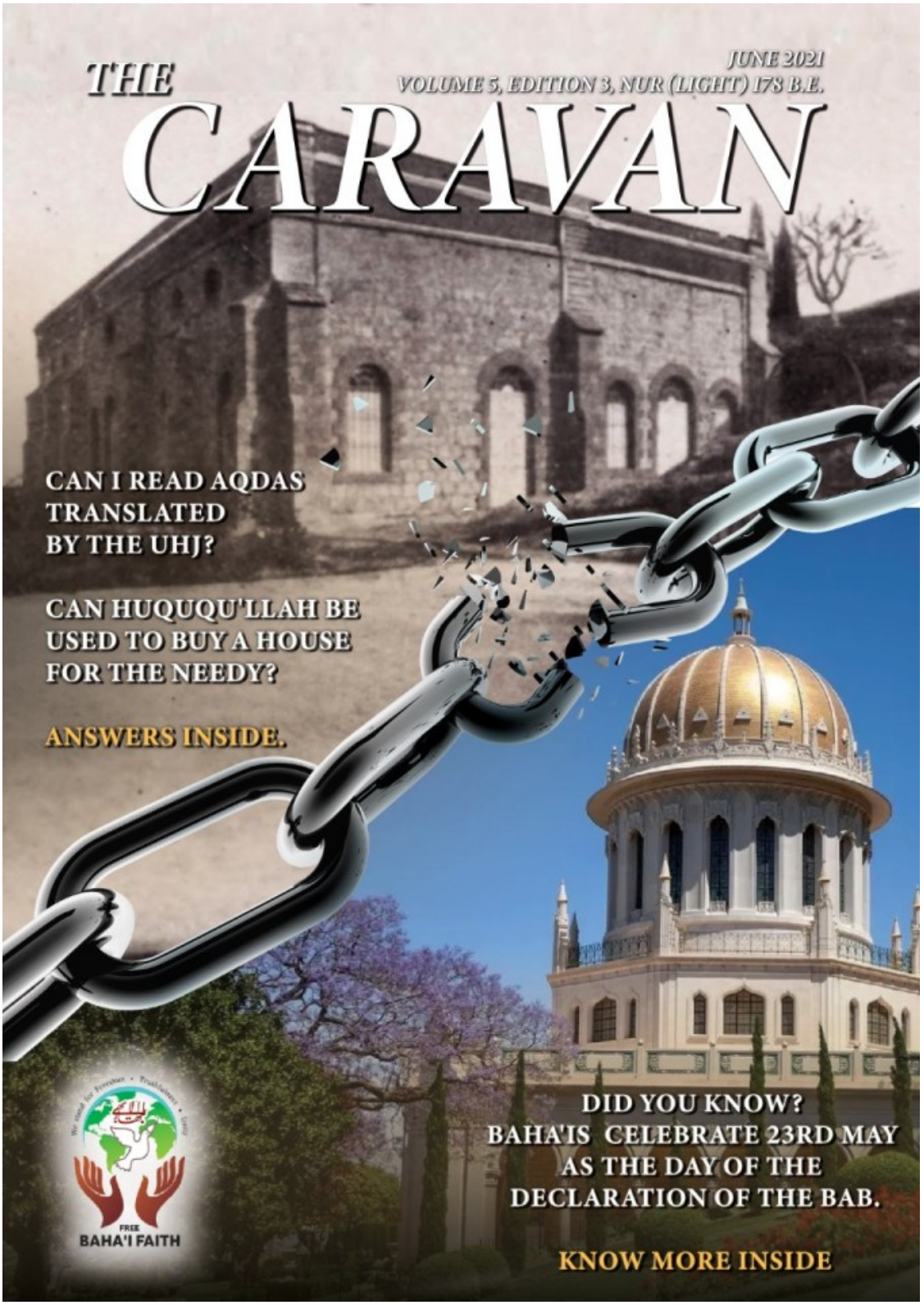
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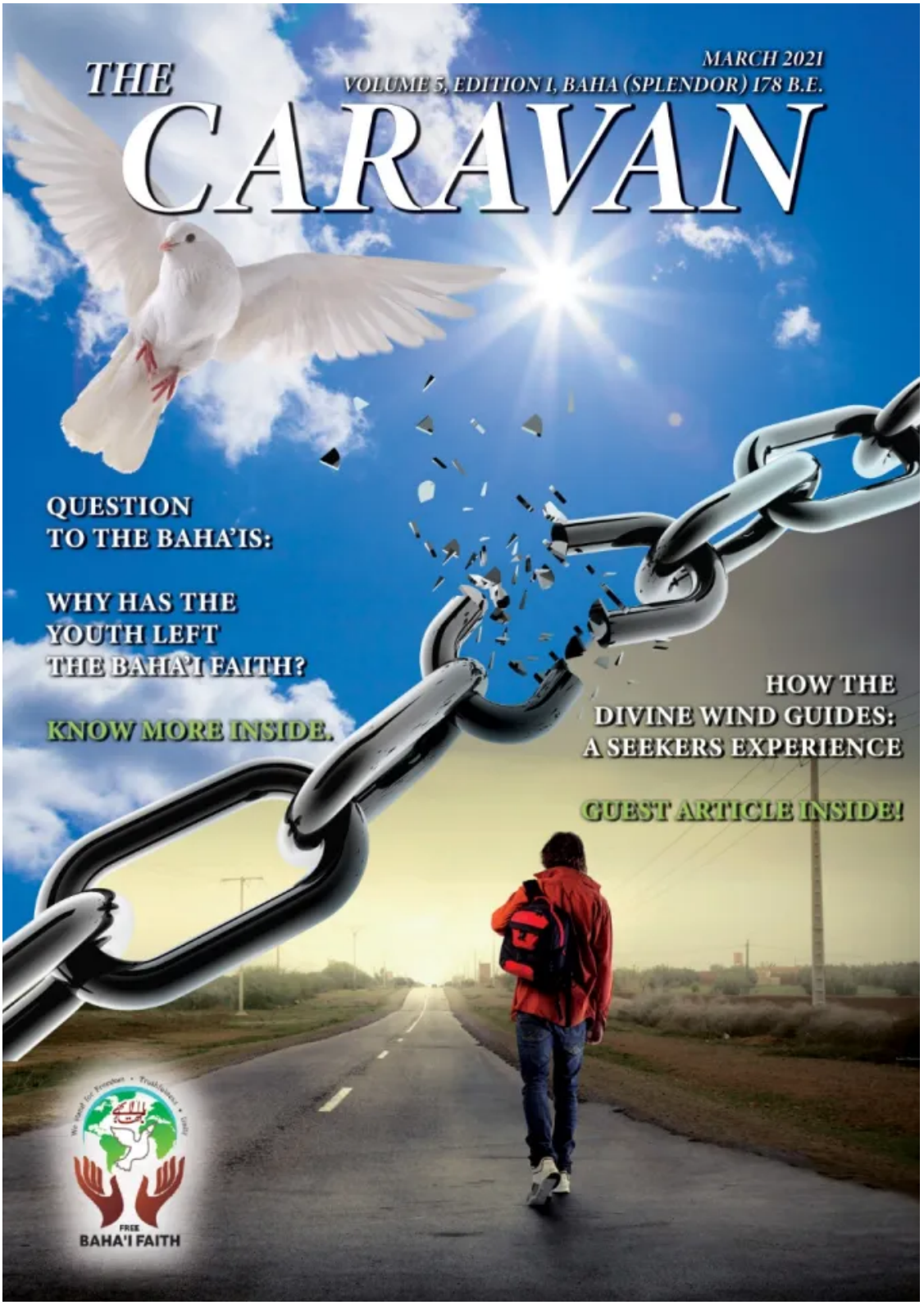

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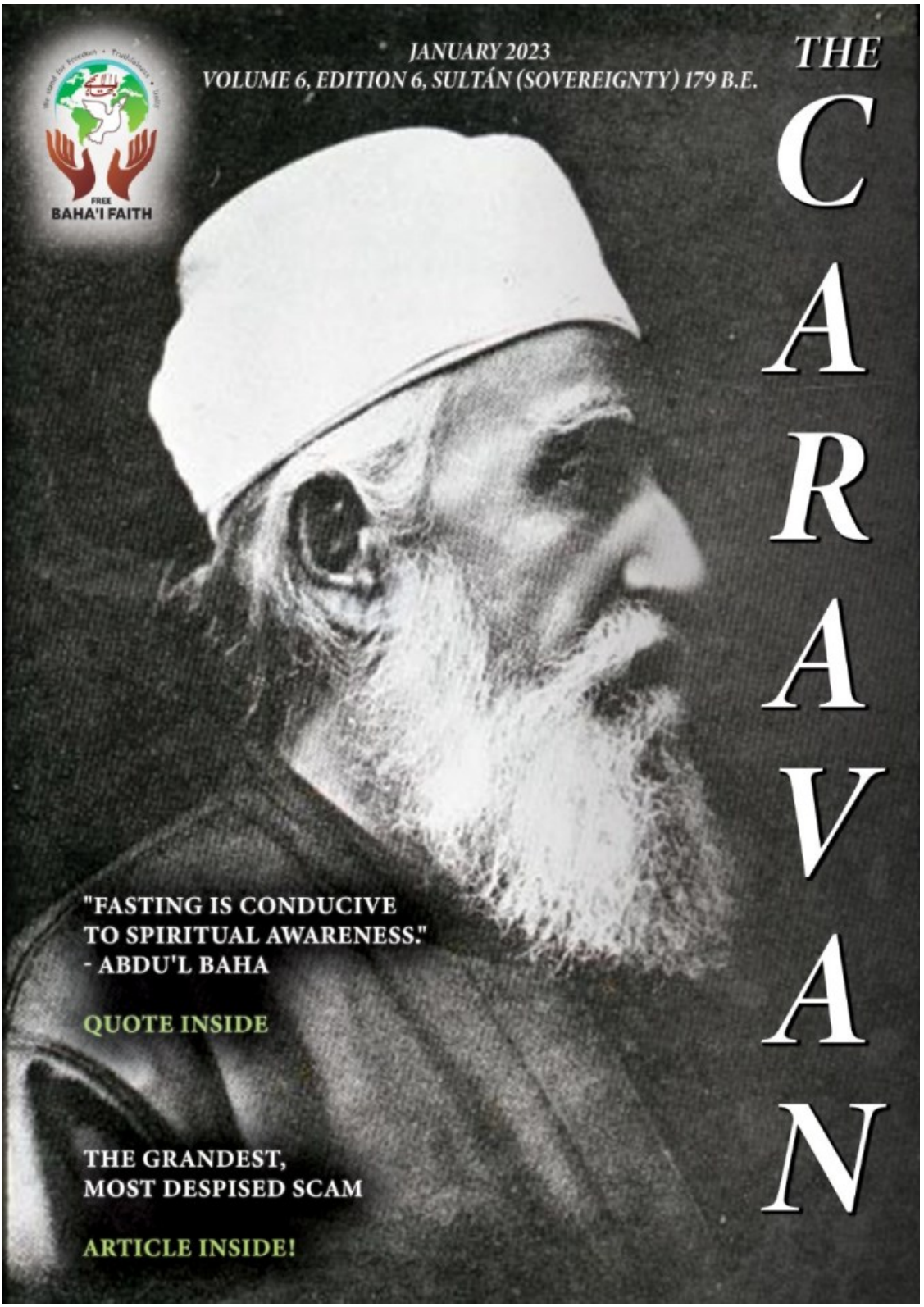

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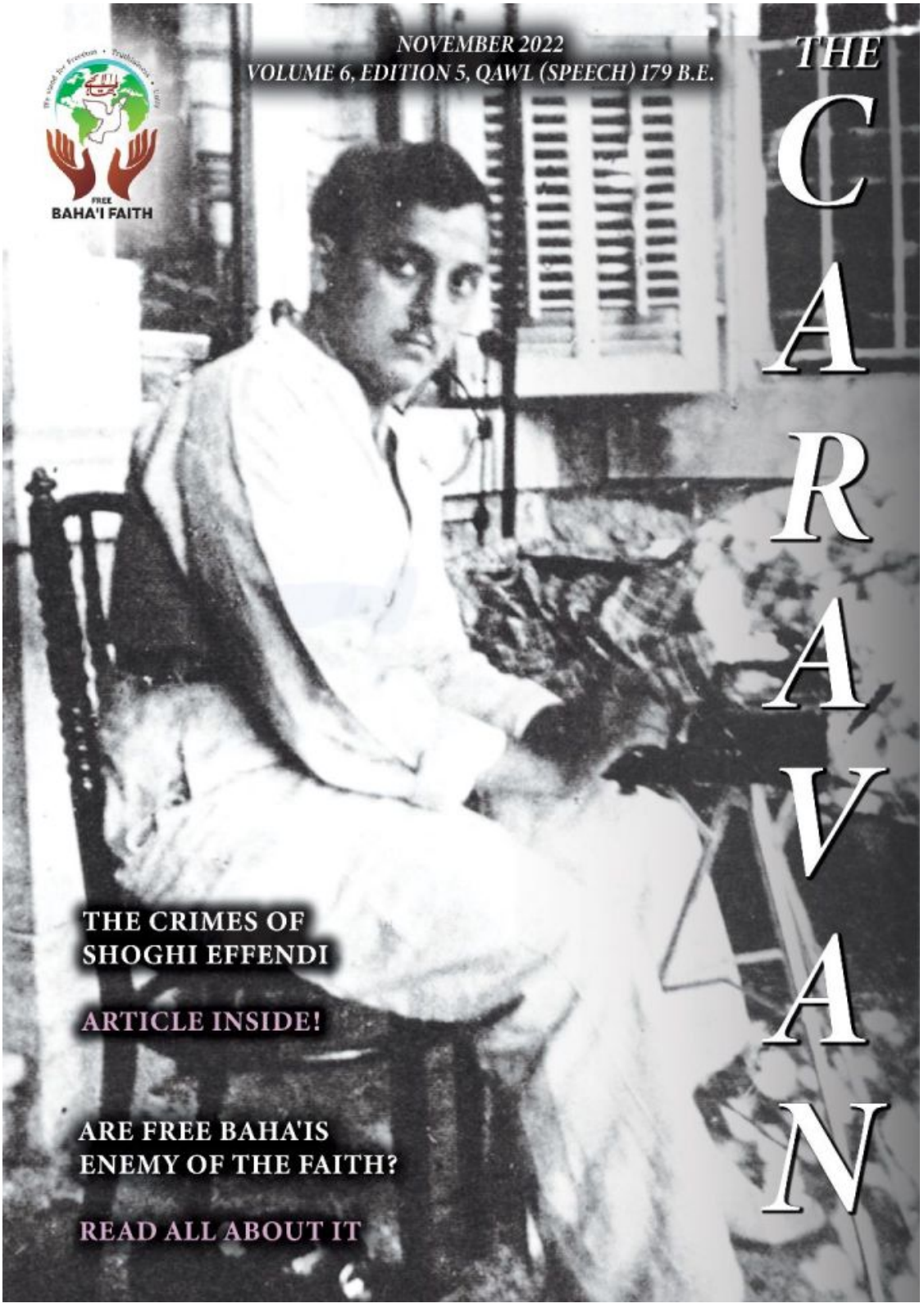

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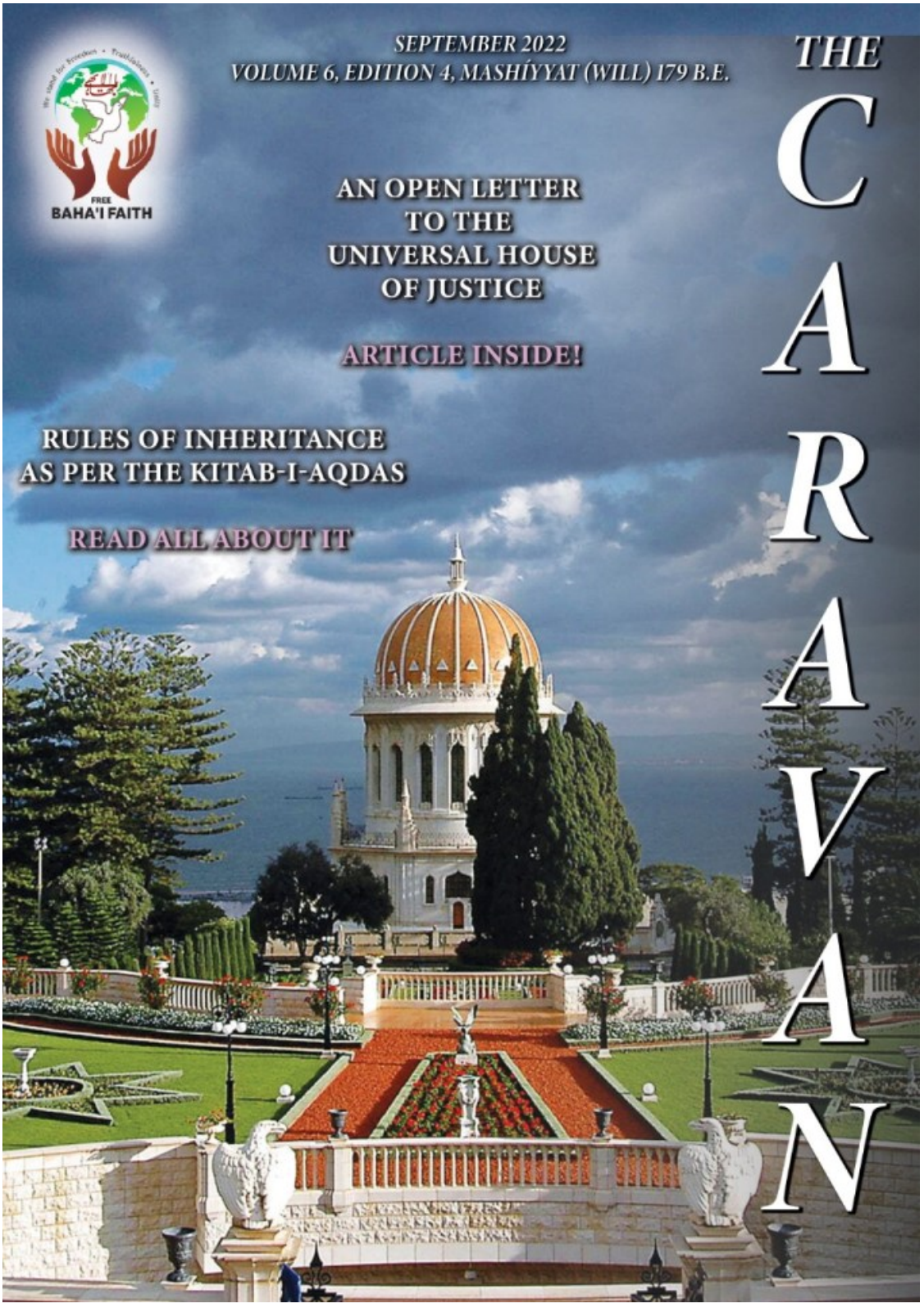
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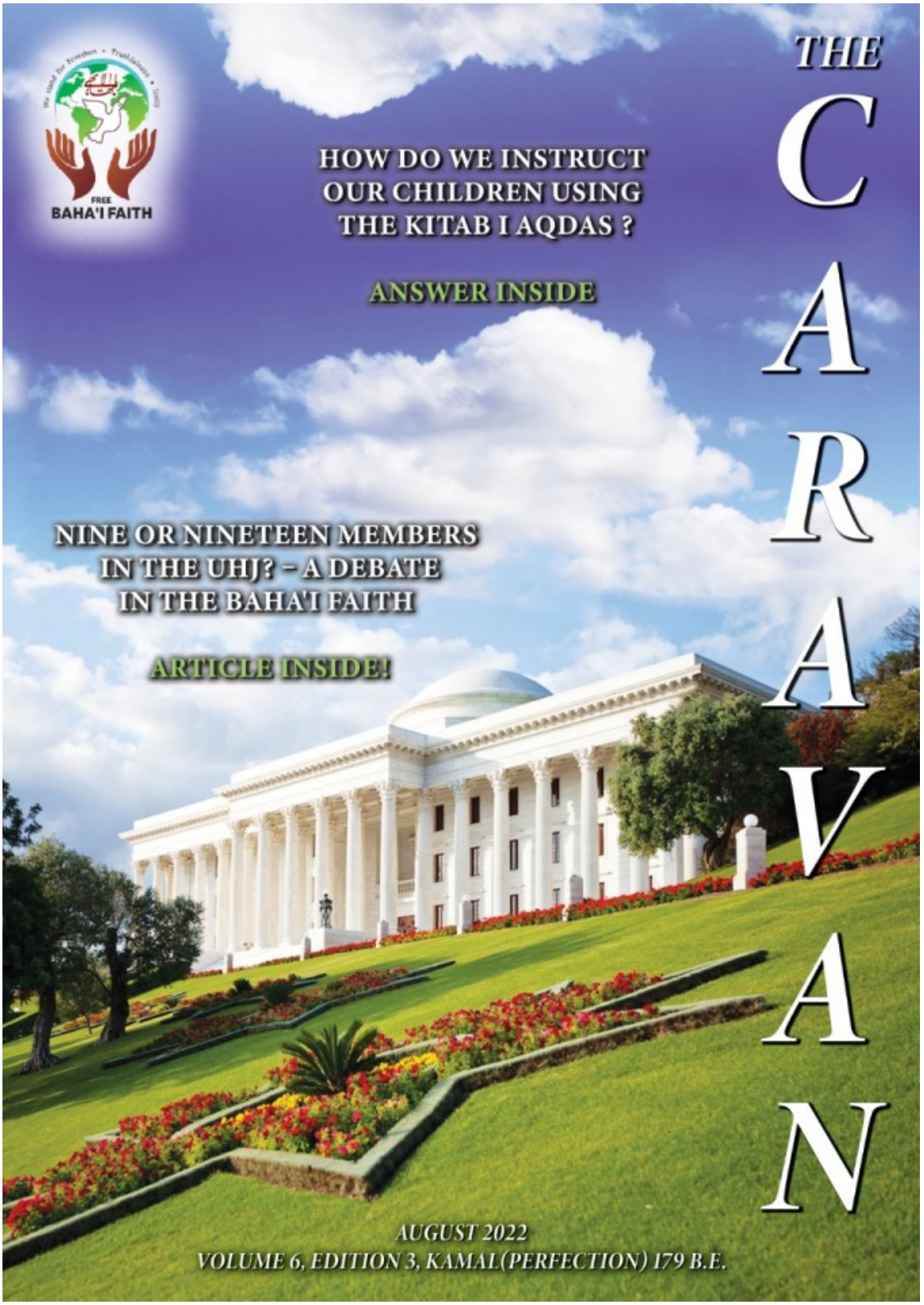
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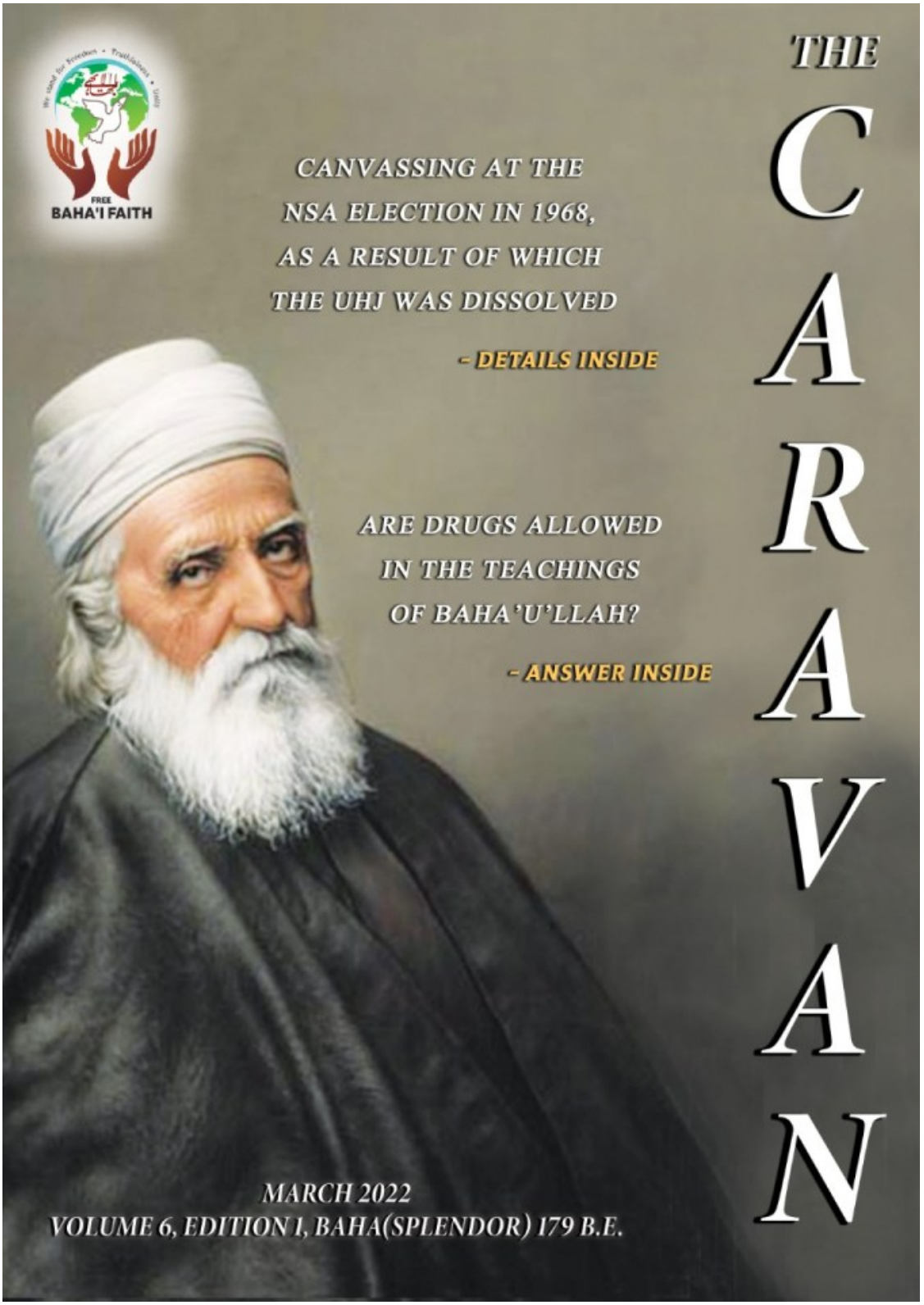

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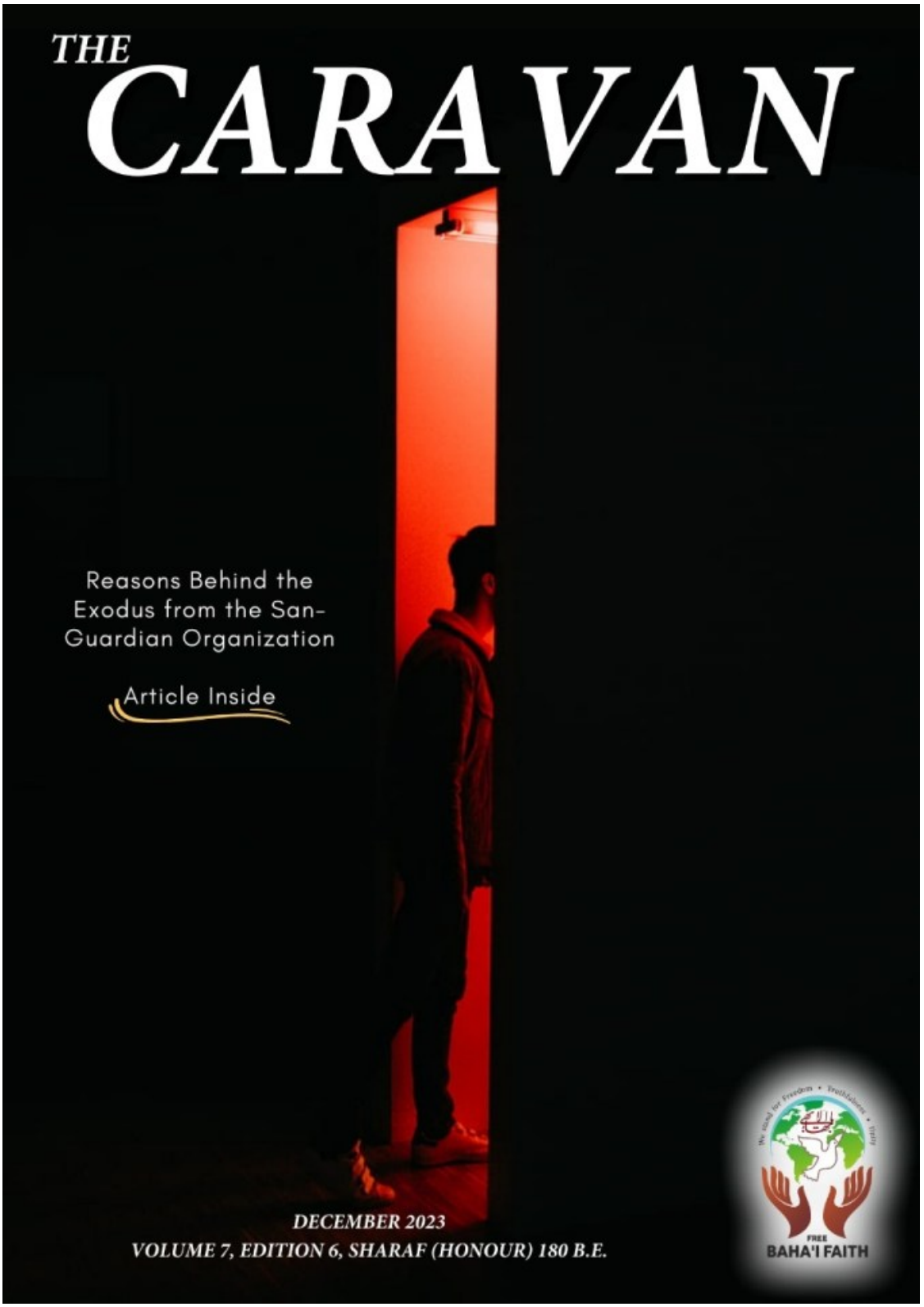

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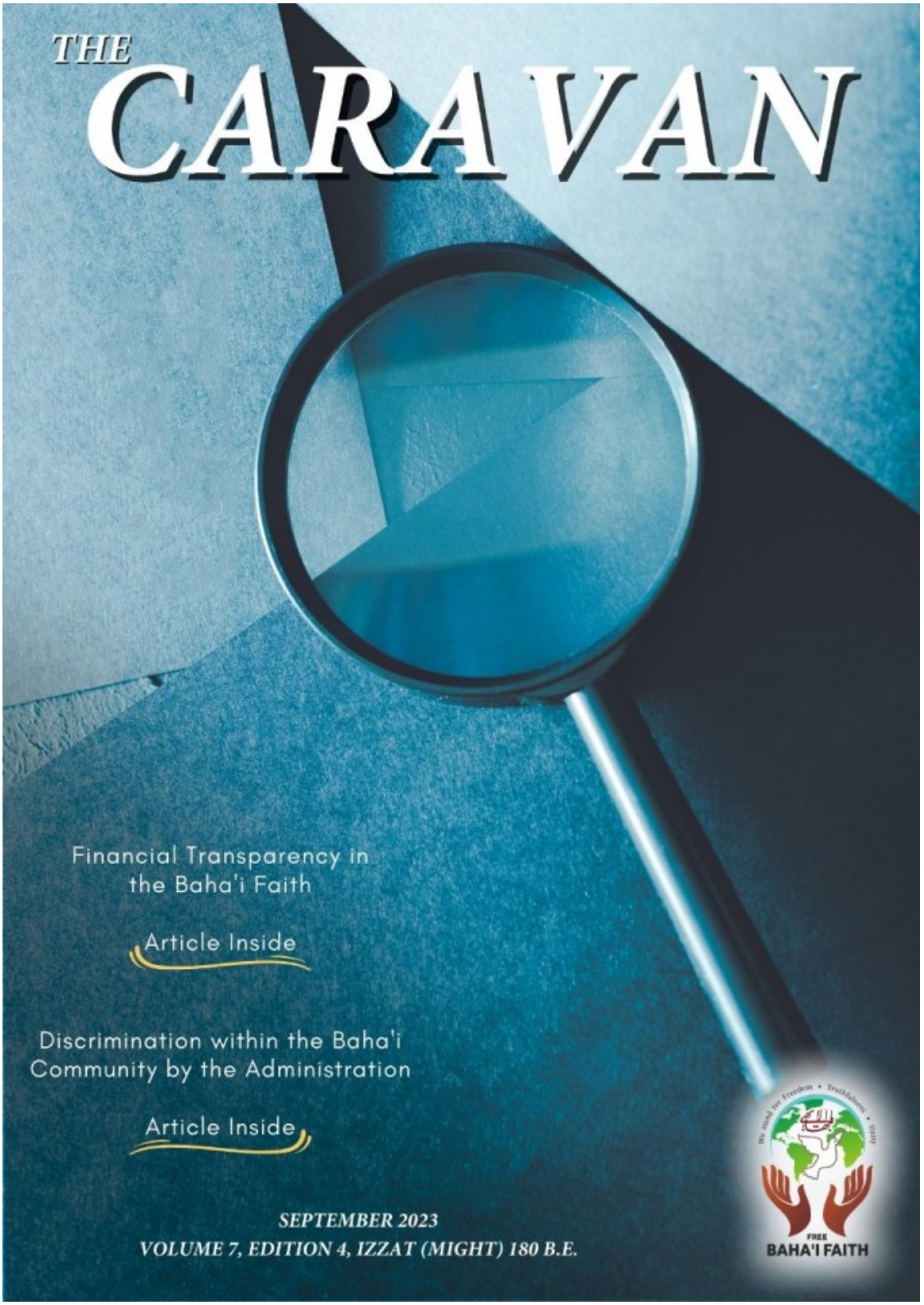

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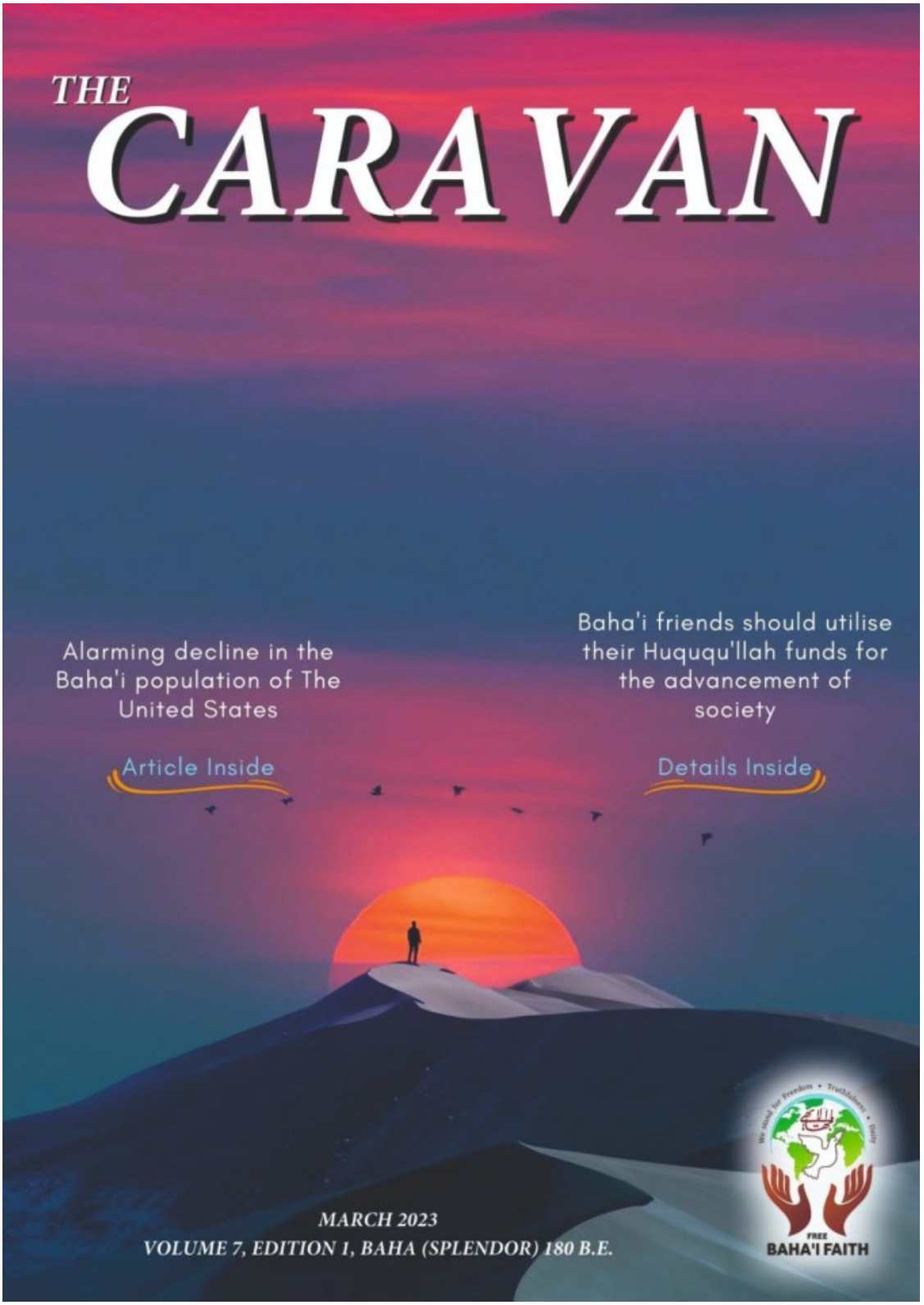
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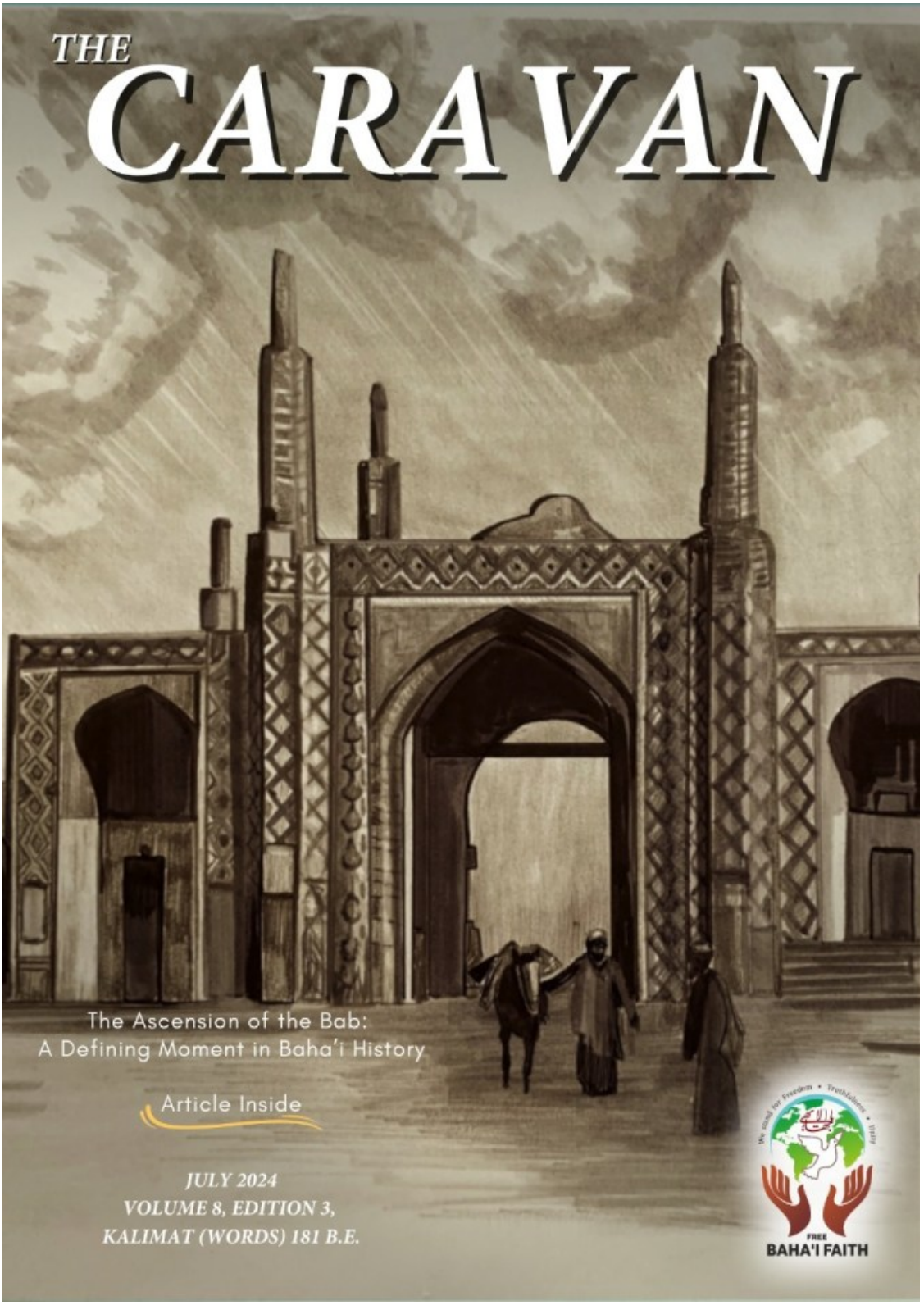

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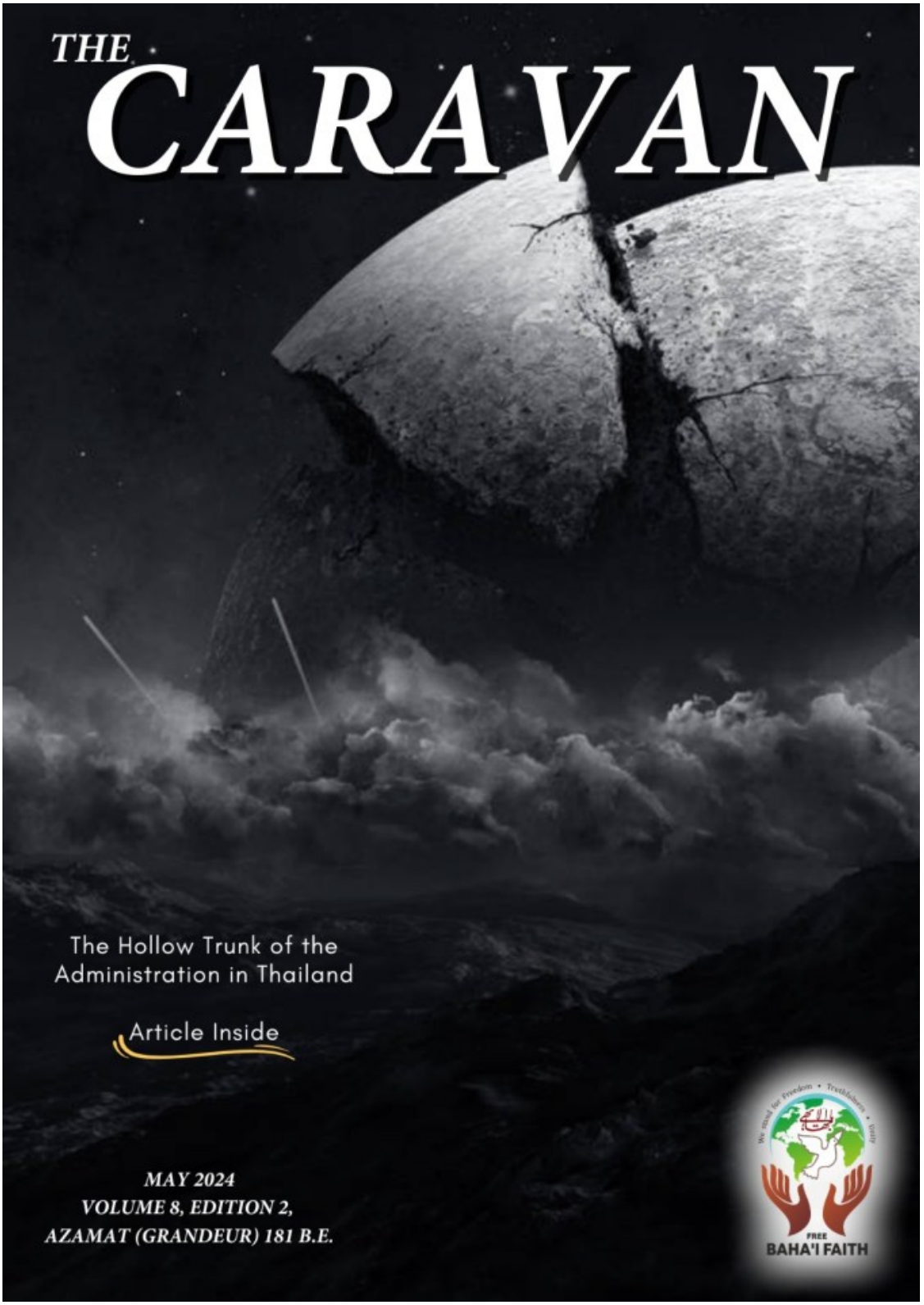

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The Case against Ruhi Effendi Afnan

The narrative of Ruhi Effendi, as I have presented it, was written with the purpose of preserving the memory of this man in the literature which is growing around the Cause. This was necessary, because those who have incurred the displeasure of the Baha'i organization are expunged from the record wherever possible, so that with time even their shadows are practically obliterated. It is true that on occasions, the names of these persons do come up in a mass listing, under a direful heading; but their achievements and good works are totally forgotten and, of course, their stories are never told.

Now, I have not attempted to tell Ruhi Effendi's story from his point of view. Such an effort would have been presumptive for, although I knew him well in his youth and have since observed his development with interest, the barriers of distance and separate channels of activity have intervened between us. Likewise, I could not comment on the events which led to his excommunication, for these are shrouded in mystery; yet, one thing I could do, and have done—this was to state his standing in the Cause which was won on his own merits, and to offer a picture of him based on his writings, for the benefit of the Baha'i public of today and of the years to come.

Needless to say, I have not received a sign of approval from him, for excommunicated persons do not place themselves in one category, to make merry or lament on the same ground. Of this order, there are definite grades which are recognized not only by the Baha'i community but by the outcasts themselves. Consequently I, who am close to black on the tone chart of untouchability, cannot expect to communicate with those who an listed under the greys; although, for my part, I confess to being rather colour-blind in this respect and feel myself fundamentally involved with all shades of God's children, however different their opinions may be from my own.

The writing of a biographical sketch on a living person is not an easy task. In praising, one tries to be restrained; in implying a criticism, one hopes to be inoffensive. Through it all, truth is of first importance; otherwise, it were best either to lay down the pen or else devote one's time to fiction.

These difficulties were apparent to some of my friends within the Baha'i organization and to the others outside of it. It was said that I had enough trouble on my hands, and that I should not go hunting for more. Also, I was reminded that my readers had small interest in the internal disputes of the Baha'i organization and that they might lose patience with me altogether. This latter was sound advice and I realized it;

nevertheless, my inner voice insisted that it was incumbent upon me to pay a tribute to the grandson of ‘Abdu’l Baha, which task I have discharged to the best of my ability.

Reasons in Toto

The excommunication of Ruhi Effendi was a totally arbitrary act as can be estimated from the Guardian’s cablegrams, passages of which I quote. The reasons given, and all of them, are as follows:—

Reason I

Ruhi’s sister married covenant-breaker Fayzi.

Reason II

(The) flagrant disloyalty (of) Ruhi’s family compels me (to) disclose information so long (and) patiently withheld (from) American believers concerning his failure (to) obtain my approval (of) his second visit (to) America

Reason III

His subsequent conduct regarding his marriage which I refrained from revealing (to) anyone except your Assembly, as well as Foad’s departure (to) England without my knowledge should now be made known to believers.

Reason I

The First Reason applies to the marriage of Ruhi Effendi’s sister to the son of Furighyyeh Khanum, daughter of Baha’u’llah.

Now, I happen to have known the two elder brothers of this young man, the late Hussein Effendi Afnan when he was aide-DE-camp to Fayzal, King of Iraq, and Nayyar Effendi Afnan who was Commissioner of Parks in Cairo, Egypt. Both of them were noble Baha’is, who had achieved distinction in their respective fields; yet the Guardian has chosen to stigmatize this entire family, which incidentally was greatly cherished by ‘Abdu’l Baha, with the name of coven ant-breaker, and he therefore is displeased with the marriage which has taken place between these two cousins of his.

However, this is a story in itself and does not apply to Ruhi Effendi. He did not marry into the honourable family above-mentioned; therefore, I claim that the First Reason given for his excommunication is entirely beside the point and cannot be taken seriously.

Reason II

The Second Reason is on the grounds that Ruhi Effendi failed to obtain the Guardian’s approval of his second visit to America.

It happens that my readers have seen the advance announcement of this visit, published in Baha’i News by the National Spiritual Assembly, in which it was stated that Ruhi Effendi was expected in this country and that he was coming with the approval of the Guardian. Now, we can say with certainty that the National Assembly had been in communication with the Guardian in regard to this visit; that this announcement was made following his instructions, and that the warm welcome accorded to, and the series of meetings arranged for the distinguished guest were in conformance with Shoghi Effendi’s wishes. It seems incredible that the printed words of the National Spiritual Assembly should now be flouted to so great an extent; yet, such is the case. The Guardian in his cablegram of excommunication goes back on his trusted administrative organ and brands it with untruth; an action which is unwise, for hereafter no one can put much weight on the statements made by the National Spiritual Assembly.

Let us suppose that Ruhi Effendi’s visit to this country was made without the Guardian’s approval, but with his permission which we know had to be granted. If such were the case, there was an excellent precedent for

it which we will now review:—

Shortly before the Master's departure from this life, Shoghi Effendi determined to go to Oxford, England, to continue his education. He had suffered a disappointment at the University of Beirut, having failed to obtain the degree of M.A. upon which he had set his heart; and the fact that his fellow Baha'i students had won this honor made the situation all the harder. Now, 'Abdu'l Baha was disappointed too, but he did not make a point of it. He felt that his grandson had derived much benefit from the University and that a degree was not absolutely essential. He wished Shoghi Effendi to remain in Haifa to take up the work of the Cause at his side. Undoubtedly, he needed him; also he probably felt that his time on this earth was not to be very long. So, Shoghi Effendi stayed in Haifa for a few years.

Now, Shoghi Effendi has a very strong scholastic leaning and he could not give up the desire for further education; consequently, the time arrived when a definite issue arose in Haifa: Shoghi Effendi insisted on going to Oxford, and the Master insisted that he should remain at home.

To make a long story short, Shoghi Effendi won his point, for the ladies of the household were so sympathetic to his distress that they interceded for him with 'Abdu'l Baha. Thus, Shoghi Effendi finally went to Oxford, without the Master's approval but with his permission. He was there when 'Abdu'l Baha passed away from this life and was unable to return until more than a month after the funeral services.

Naturally, the Master did not excommunicate his grandson for this determination to have his own way; therefore, by the same token, if Ruhi Effendi came to America without the Guardian's approval but with his permission, he likewise should not have received punishment. Also, in view of the fact that the National Spiritual Assembly had gone on record as saying that the visit was made with the Guardian's approval, the statement should have been honoured. Consequently, I claim that the Second Reason given for the excommunication of Ruhi Effendi cannot be sustained in a court of ethics or of law.

Reason III

The Third Reason is in regard to his marriage, although nothing is told us of this event other than the fact. It would seem that Ruhi Effendi had a right to pick out his own wife, and as his choice fell within the family circle it is obvious that he did not marry outside of his class or of the Cause. This excuse of marriage brings to mind an event of world-wide importance which took place in the first family of England, which has a similar aspect to the one with which we are dealing, although it cannot be called a parallel.

In the case of Edward VIII there existed certain disadvantages: the lady was an American; she was divorced; she was not of royal birth. However, in view of prevailing modem conditions, an adjustment could have been made if the Tory element in England had so wished. Yet, the tragic break occurred; the King was deprived of his rights and sent into exile. Why was this? The answer is well known: Edward VIII was too liberal, too progressive, too democratic; the stand-pat dignitaries of the Empire thought him dangerous and longed for his downfall. So, the abdication was consummated and the idol of the nation became persona non grata. Thus, the royal house of England lost its most gifted and decorative representative, and the nation, a valuable asset which could not be replaced or supplemented.

Those who have studied the talks and writings of Ruhi Effendi can see very clearly that this material could not have been pleasing to the Administration, for it contained an inherent liberality and tolerance which did not fit into a totalitarian pattern. Doubtless, this descendant of Baha'u'llah caused a good deal of anxiety to the authorities. He seemed to be of the old order of 'Abdu'l Baha, which is synonymous with being of the new order of a world society; and he constituted a threat to the system which had chosen to forget the universality in the Cause, which was its heritage, and its destiny. Consequently, reasons for his elimination from the picture had to be worked out; and one of the excuses was his marriage.

Now, I claim that the outworn method of excommunication applies to heresy in religion, having nothing to do with the private life of an individual, and that the Third Reason for the excommunication of Ruhi Effendi is totally invalid.
We have examined in their order the excuses given for the expulsion of 'Abdu'l Baha's grandson from the Baha'i community; and can accept them as just, reject them as unjust, or pass on to other matters with a sigh of relief, finding the whole subject outside of our line of interests. However that may be, the case of the Guardian of the Baha'i Cause against Ruhi Effendi, in which the extreme penalty was exacted on grounds that were not legal, nor logical, nor ethical, nor moral, must stand before history as one more example of the overriding irresponsibility of Fascism as expressed in this abnormal age. Let us however expect that, in the perspective of the future, organized terrorism will appear as but a phase of the great' day of transition which will have developed into the day of Universal Democracy—the Day of Baha'u'llah.

Foad
But, who is Foad?" This question was asked of me by some Baha'is who had noted the name in one of Shoghi Effendi's cables of excommunication. It is included in the Third Reason, as quoted in this chapter.

Foad is the youngest brother of Ruhi Effendi; but he is not merely part of a family that has been placed under spiritual quarantine. He is a wrongdoer in his own right. **Quote:** *Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge, should now be made known (to) believers.*

It is questionable whether this action was better or worse than was that of his brother. The latter went to England without the Guardian's approval; the former, without his knowledge. It seems to me that Foad Effendi was wise; he intended to go to England (I surmise, to pursue his studies), and, not wishing to run the risk of being forbidden to do so, he simply took French leave. I hope he got what he wanted out of his sojourn in that country and, certainly, I think no less of him for having conducted his private life as he saw fit.

I remember Foad as a baby of a year or so at the time when I left Palestine in 1918. Since then, I have not returned to that country, so the little knowledge I have of him is derived from the writings of the pilgrims. This actually is not knowledge, but rather a few glimpses of a child as seen through the eyes of visitors to Haifa. It appears that he was an independent little personality even at the age of three, and I have heard that he was a delight to his grandfather who found much amusement in his precocious ways.

In The Light of the World by William H. Randall, published in 1919, we read a description of An Afternoon with the Household. In the above-named chapter, on page 132, Foad makes his appearance as naturally as would any child in any ordinary family:-

At this point little Foad entered the room breathlessly and began speaking very fast and excitedly. It seemed that his pet donkey had a fever and he was asking 'Abdu'l Baha to pray for it. Earlier in the afternoon he had given two oranges to 'Abdu'l Baha. The Master now gave him one to eat. When he had finished, the other was given to him with the instruction: "Give this to the ladies." He firmly refused, saying the gardener had said that no one but 'Abdu'l Baha should eat the oranges, and no amount of persuasion could make him give it to the ladies—but be had already eaten one himself.

In the same book, on page 86, we find the children at the supper-table, in the presence of the ever-loving and indulgent Host:-

At supper, Foad and Riaz, the two three-year old grandchildren of Abdul Baba, were both seated at one end of the table, their faces shining with joy and happiness for this privilege. We learned that before dinner, the Greatest Holy Leaf had told Foad that as he had been there all the day, it was better for him to go borne for dinner. He quickly left the room, going direct to 'Abdu'l Baha and complained of this. He replied with loving

kindness; “Of course, you can stay with me for dinner.” Immediately Foad returned triumphant to the rest of the family, saying:- “Now you see, the Master wants me to stay with him.”

In an article by Miss Genevieve L. Coy printed in Star of the West, October 16, 192l, page 198, we come across the irrepressible Foad offering his services as protector to ‘Abdu’l Baha:-

In a short time the Master came from around the eastern corner of the Tomb, followed by little Foad. The Master was radiantly beautiful. He wore a dove-colored overcoat or wrap, for the wind was cool on the mountainside. Foad was dressed in a stiffly starched white dress, and made a staunch little bodyguard for the Master. (Someone told us that one night Foad went up to the Master after supper and said, “You go to bed now and rest. I will take my gun and lie across the threshold. If any thieves come, I will scare them away!”)

These simple anecdotes give a picture of Foad Effendi Afnan as he figured in ‘Abdu’l Baha’s household at the start of his life. Now at the age of twenty-five years, he has been excluded from the one-time happy family circle and from the Baha’i community in all parts of the world. He will forever be classed as an enemy of the Cause and be relegated: to the limbo of forgotten things, if the Baha’is continue to agree that the punishment of excommunication fitted the crime, which was, I blush to remind my readers, that of traveling to England without permission.

Conclusion

The above digression from the account of Ruhi Effendi is not actually such, for his family is an inextricable part of the sad story -which I have felt called upon to write. My task is now completed and I leave it for whatever it may be worth, happy in the fact that my tribute is paid and is on record. In this work, I have had no arr’tere pensie of any kind, and especially no expectation that Ruhi Effendi should, at any time, lend his talents to the aspect of Baha’i endeavour for which I strive. The world is large; our pathways will probably never cross, but the Light which we follow is the same. It falls on us without distinction and will guide us to the same goal I trust that his journey will be fruitful in the future as it has been in the past; that his name will continue to shine on the records of the Cause and that he, descendant of the Bab, Baha’u’llah and ‘Abdu’l Baha, will fulfill: glorious destiny as a man, the ramparts of whose spirit are unbreached.
Meanwhile, I must express my very ardent hope that the evaluation of an excommunicated person, as set down by the National Spiritual Assembly (Baha’i News, No. 134, March 1940, page 2), will seem a ridiculous to Ruhi Effendi as it does to me. This statement reads:-

. . . his expulsion or excommunication from the Faith, which can be effected by the Guardian alone, in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head of the community, has far reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer.

And a little further in the same article:-

But in case he is excluded from the body of the Cause by an act of the Guardian he ceases to be a believer, and cannot possibly identify himself even nominally with the Faith.

I know that Ruhi Effendi is far too intelligent to take such an argument seriously; besides, he has had his instructions) long since—instructions from Baha’u’llah himself. They read:-

Verily, God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause according to his ability. Thus hath the command been recorded by the Finger of Might and Power upon the Tablet of Majesty and Greatness.
—Baha’i Scriptures, p. 257

Again:—
Be as the blowing wind of the Merciful to the trees of the created world, and rear them up in the name of

thy Lord, the Equitable, the Learned One.
—Baha'i Scriptures, p. 189

These teachings cannot be abrogated; they are there to stay, as is the promise:—
Whosoever quickens one soul in this Cause is like unto one who quickeneth all the servants and the Lord shall bring him forth in the Day of Resurrection into the Rizwan of oneness, adorned with the Mantle of Himself.
—Baha'i Scriptures, p. 258

And now comes the burden of 'Abdu'l Baha's message, delivered on earth. It is his message now, received according to our understanding; and, dare anyone doubt, conveyed at this time to his grandson with peculiar emphasis:—
Abandon silence and seclusion and solitary nooks and go forth into the arena of explanation. Convey the Message of thy Lord with clearest speech and most complete elucidation. This is better for thee than solitude.
—Tablets of 'Abdu'l Baha, Vol. III, p. 520

The concept of election introduced by Shoghi was exactly the same as Bolshevism

The concept of election in the Baha'i Administration which was introduced by Shoghi Effendi was exactly the same as Bolshevism, the communist form of government adopted in Russia following the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. All his tactics and those of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly are very much akin to those of the Soviet government of that time.

Let us read the following passage, as quoted by Lady Ruth White in her book 'The Baha'i Religion and its Enemy the Baha'i Organization', under Chapter II.

During 1926, when I visited the Bahai Assemblies in all the large cities, on my way to California, I perceived that so subtly had a transition been made from the original principles of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha that the teachings had become completely inverted with few of the Baha'is realizing this. In fact, I saw scarcely a trace of the Baha'i teachings evidenced anywhere. To be sure I heard much talk about universal peace and the brotherhood of man, and many other principles that are commonly talked about by the votaries of dozens of sects and reforms today. But talk about these principles is worse than ineffectual when people act in a narrow sectarian way, as the Baha'is were, and are doing, in violation of the universal principles of the Bahai Religion.

From everything I observed I knew that Shoghi Effendi had made a very careful study of Bolshevism, not in order to combat it, as Abdu'l Baha said we should do, but in order to imitate its methods, and apply them to the Administration of the Baha'i Organization. This despite the fact that Abdu'l Baha said:

"The future is bad...Nations should strive to extinguish this fire (of Bolshevism) so that it would not spread to other countries. It will soon affect other countries...for the mass of people have a Bolshevik tendency." (The Light of the World)

I happened to mention this in one of my talks. After the lecture I was approached by one of the members of the Assembly and informed that Shoghi Effendi had forbidden this to be mentioned—that everything of a political nature must be eliminated from discussions. Naturally, he would require such restrictions, as his tactics and those of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly are very much akin to those of the

Soviet government today. In the New York Sunday Herald of March 17, 1929, there appeared an article by E. A. Ashmead-Bartlett, C.B.E., who left Russia only six weeks ago. He was formerly a member of parliament on political, economic and military conditions in Russia. He shows how nine people are keeping 140,000,000 people in subjection, and the method that they use in election is so identical with that which Shoghi Effendi has imitated, hoping that he, too, may in time become a dictator on the same colossal scale, that I here quote it in part:

"But in reality, changes in the Politique Bureau are only brought about by the members themselves. They name their own list of candidates and the delegates vote as they are told. No opposition group would dare put up candidates of its own choice..."

"The Politique Bureau now consists of nine persons, who form the Supreme Governing Executive ..." "The latter's duties are considered very important and consist of studying the rolls of all those employed on local Soviets or in factories to find out if they are strict Communist...."

"When issues have to be voted on, the procedure is simple and effective. The chairman reads out the motion and then demands those who are against it to raise their hands. The delegates know too well what will happen to them if they oppose a motion once it has been adopted by the platform and sit in silence." "When the government has had enough of these meetings, which are liable to drag on interminably, all it has to do is to close the restaurant and then the delegates are very pleased to clear out of Moscow. The whole farce is a magnificent piece of stage management to make the delegates—and the people they represent—believe they really have a say in the councils of the country. In reality they have none."

"It is easy to understand how all the real power in a government thus organized lies in the hands of the party chiefs, who control the machine. Stalin is to-day the master mind and possesses a supreme knowledge of the party organization owing to the many years he spent as secretary under Lenine. No change of policy can be brought about without the consent of the "Big Nine" and any proposals they make are automatically indorsed by the All Union Congress of Soviets."

Shoghi Effendi conducts the Baha'i elections in the same manner, and it is more of a farce than that of the Bolsheviks. Like them he studies the roll of the Baha'is and, through a system of espionage, he knows every shade of belief among them. He selects those who lean most favourably towards him, and the voters have no more to say about who is to be elected than the Russian people have under the Soviet regime. And like the Soviet government his chief aim is to suppress man's freedom of conscience. There is no greater violation of the Baha'i teachings than this. The following excerpts from the writings of Baha'u'llah and of Abdu'l Baha show the necessity of man's exercising his freedom of conscience:

"Since men differ in their degree of knowledge, if two persons should be found to possess different viewpoints as regards the degree and station of the Manifestation of God, both are acceptable before God, for, in accord with the blessed verse: 'Verily, we have created souls different in degrees;' God has created men different in understanding and diverse in manners. But if those having two points of view engage in conflict and strife while expressing their views, both of them are rejected. For, by knowing the Manifestation of God it is intended to unify the hearts, cultivate souls and to teach the truth of God, whereas, conflict and strife of two persons with two different points of view would do harm to the Cause of God ..." (Baha'u'llah in The Brilliant Proof, page 28 by Mirza Abul Fazl)

In the following talk given by Abdu'l Baha in 1912 he further elucidates this subject:

"..... know ye that God has created in man the power of reason whereby man is enabled to investigate reality . . . He has endowed him with mind or the faculty of reasoning by the exercise of which he is to investigate and discover the truth; and that which he finds real and true, he must accept...He must not be an imitator or

blind follower of any soul. He must not rely implicitly upon the opinion of any man without investigation; nay, each soul must seek intelligently, and independently, arriving at a real conclusion and bound only by that reality. The greatest cause of bereavement and disheartening in the world of humanity is ignorance, based upon blind imitation. It is due to this battle prevail; from this cause hatred and animosity arise continually among mankind…"

"God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigations of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain. Each human creature has individual endowment, power and responsibility in the creative plan of God. Therefore, depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation; otherwise you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God. Turn to God; supplicate humbly at his threshold, seeking assistance and confirmation, that God may rend asunder the veils that obscure your vision. Then will your eyes be filled with illumination; face to face you will behold the reality of God and your heart become completely purified from the dross of ignorance, reflecting the glories and bounties of the kingdom."

". . . It is the duty of everyone to investigate reality, and investigation of reality by another will not do …"

(The Promulgation of Universal Truth, Discourses Abdu'l Baha; pages 285-287-288)

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THE CRIMES OF SHOGHI EFFENDI AGAINST THE BAHA'I FAITH – GUEST ARTICLE

It is now a well-known and widely accepted fact that Shoghi Effendi acquired the position of Guardianship solely based on the forged Will and Testaments of Abdu'l Baha and by no other official introductions or prior appointments. The strongest evidence of the will of Abdu'l Baha (as released by Shoghi Effendi) comes from the then leading forensics expert Dr. Ainsworth Mitchell who's forte as the lead consultant for the Scotland Yard providing expert witness on issues of the written word and handwriting. He has said as part of his investigation into the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha that the document provided is a forgery. This report is widely published on the internet.

Now, the question arises, is wrongly claiming the Guardianship the only crime that was committed by Shoghi Effendi, or was there more such crimes which generally people don't talk about? Let's us look at "some" of the crimes committed by Shoghi Rabbani which took the faith in another direction altogether, away from the path shown by Baha'u'llah and the Master.

1. **Went against the Master** – Shoghi Effendi, when younger, used to routinely disobey his Grandfather (Abdu'l Baha). After failing in his college at the age of twenty-four (on account of his wayward activities), Shoghi Effendi chose to enrol himself at the Oxford University. This was despite the objections made by the Master. The Lady Ruth White has noted the following in her book regarding this unfortunate event. "In the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of Abdu'l Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with Abdu'l Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life," (Reference: Ruth White, Abdu'l Baha's Questioned Will and Testament, p 29)
2. **Introduced Fascism to the faith** – Shoghi Effendi brought Fascism to the Faith in such a way that it resembled a society in which a government governed by a dictator controls people's lives and individuals are not permitted to disagree with the government. When you read about the experiences of persons who were close to the Master and working for the Cause all over the world after the Master was requested to report back to the Guardian and cease all operations. Looking at their actions, you can see that they were all c o m m i t t e d t o t h e C a u s e , c o n v e y i n g Baha'u'llah's teachings to the masses. Some of the Baha'is who were subjected to Shoghi Effendi's excommunication decree were Lady Ruth White and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.
3. **Copy Right the Baha'i Religion** – As unbelievable as it may seem, they attempted to copyright the Baha'i Religion, filing two lawsuits in 1941 against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler to prohibit them, or anyone else, from calling themselves Baha'is or spreading the religion unless they did so through their organisation and according to their dictates. Naturally the National Spiritual Assembly lost both suits, and they were severely reprimanded by the judge. He made it clear to them that in this day of religious freedom, no one can copyright a religion or claim the exclusive rights to it. Mirza Sohrab and Mrs. Chanler who are the founders of The New History Society, established to spread the Baha'i teachings, did a great service to mankind, by winning these two suits. They won religious freedom for the Baha'i Movement and broke the strangle hold that the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is had over is which had impeded its progress. (Reference: Baha'i Leads Out of the Labyrinth by Ruth White). Abdu'l Baha says, "No one can bottle up the Baha'i Spirit. The Baha'i Spirit is the most illusive ether; it is here, it is there, it is everywhere. It is the origin and substance of the highest ideals of this and the coming ages. The Baha'i Spirit is undogmatic, super-

racial, inter-social and non-partisan. “The Baha’i Religion is not an exclusive society, but a Divine congregation, the dome of which is the Infinite Heaven, and the temple of which Is the expanse of the earth.”

4. **Excommunicating the family of Baha’u’llah** – As per Baha’i teachings, there is to be no clergy or supreme leader / unquestioned commander in the Baha’i faith. But Shoghi Effendi managed or rather ruled the faith as his personal fiefdom. Much akin to a tyrant Pope or a crazy Mollah, he excommunicated the entire family of Abdu’l Baha on frivolous pretexts, like travelling abroad without informing him or for marrying without his permission or even for a t t e n d i n g B a h a ‘ i g a t h e r i n g s w i t h o u t informing him. While none of these innocent family members of Abdu’l Baha broke Covenant, what they did break was the ginormous ego of this tyrant “Guardian” which resulted in their excommunication. The true reason for these excommunications was Shoghi Effendi’s insecurity about his fragile position and his paranoia which afforded no challengers or questioners to his unchecked authority.
5. **Introduced the concept of election exactly the same as Bolshevism** – The notion of election proposed by Shoghi Effendi in the Baha’i Administration was identical to Bolshevism, the communist system of administration instituted in Russia following the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. All of his techniques, as well as those of the National Spiritual Assembly, are remarkably similar to those of the Soviet government at the time. Despite the fact that Abdu’l Baha said: “The future is bad…Nations should strive to extinguish this fire (of Bolshevism) so that it would not spread to other countries. It will soon affect other countries…for the mass of people have a Bolshevik tendency.” (The Light of the World) As quoted by Lady Ruth White in her book ‘The Baha’i Religion and its Enemy the Baha’i Organization’, under Chapter II, “Shoghi Effendi conducts the Baha’i elections in the same manner, and it is more of a farce than that of the Bolsheviks. Like them he studies the roll of the Baha’is and, through a system of espionage, he knows every shade of belief among them. He selects those who lean most favourably towards him, and the voters have no more to say about who is to be elected than the Russian people have under the Soviet regime. And like the Soviet government his chief aim is to suppress man’s freedom of conscience. There is no greater violation of the Baha’i teachings than this.”
6. **Converted charity funds for personal use** – According to a famous Russian proverb, “one is not a thief till caught stealing.” So, only this one episode demonstrates Shoghi’s malice towards the faith in the presence of the Master. As narrated by Lady Ruth White in her book, The Baha’i Religion and its Enemy the Baha’i Organization – “In the Autumn of 1919 I sent to Abdul Baha an American Express Company check of Five hundred dollars and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing. About four months after we arrived in Haifa as the guests of Abdu’l Baha. On the day before departure I asked Abdu’l Baha if he had received the check. Without a moment’s hesitation and very emphatically he said that he had not received it. He repeated this a number of times, and seemed indignant that it had not been turned over to him. I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdu’l Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter. He returned and said there were no record of the check. When I returned to America I asked the American Express Company to look up the receipt of the check I had sent through their office, and on the back of it was the signature of the person who had received the cash. This person was Shoghi Rabbani [i.e. Shoghi Effendi]. Circumstantial evidence also points to the fact that Shoghi Effendi used the money to go to Oxford University. For immediately after cashing the check he departed for Oxford.”
7. **Making the Faith a bureaucratic organisation** – Was the Baha’i Faith designed to be a very bureaucratic religion ruled from on high? Because of such a mind-set existing throughout the Baha’i community since the passing away of the Master, many Baha’is have been alienated from the Faith. Is this, however, the substance of the original teachings? Can anyone imagine Baha’u’llah excommunicating somebody based on some questions? Was the notion of “Independent Investigation

of Truth" then a sham? When a Baha'i expresses his opinions, the chain of excommunication begins, eventually culminating to his expulsion from the faith. Even bringing out the scripture texts in this article and striving to change the Faith in accordance with such teachings, Baha'is today would be expelled from their faith. All thanks to the 'so-called' Guardian for introducing such teachings in the faith. Indeed, Baha'is are frequently reprimanded or expelled from their religious community just for voicing thoughts that oppose those in authority in national and international organisations.

8. **Not leaving behind a Will** – Writing a will has been made mandatory for all Baha'is, and it is referenced in the Kitab-i-Aqdas. "Unto everyone hath been enjoined the writing of a will", Baha'u'llah writes in Kitab-i-Aqdas #109. Shoghi Effendi not only willfully defied Abdu'l Baha, but also decided to skirt divine law by failing to leave a will and left the Baha'is affairs in chaos following his death. What a great Guardian to have; if he is unconcerned about his own matters, how can he keep the Baha'is in order?

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"It makes no difference whether you have ever heard of Baha'u'llah or not. The man who lives the life according to the teachings of Baha'u'llah is already a Baha'i. On the other hand, a man may call himself a Baha'i for fifty years and if he does not live the life he is not a Baha'i. An ugly man may call himself handsome, but he deceives no one, and a black man may call himself white yet he deceives no one: not even himself!" (Abdu'l Baha in London, p. 106.)

Such a lovely saying! I hope this helps you see how the faith was distorted for Shoghi's personal gain and how it was used to destroy the essence of the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Master.

Regards,

Mark

Reference: The Caravan Magazine, Vol. 6, Ed. 5 – Shoghi Special Edition

The Crimes of Shoghi Effendi Against the Baha'i Faith

It is now a well-known and widely accepted fact that Shoghi Effendi acquired the position of Guardianship solely based on the forged Will and Testaments of Abdu'l Baha and by no other official introductions or prior appointments. The strongest evidence of the will of Abdu'l Baha (as released by Shoghi Effendi) comes from the then leading forensics expert Dr. Ainsworth Mitchell who's forte as the lead consultant for the Scotland Yard providing expert witness on issues of the written word and handwriting. He has said as part of his investigation into the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha that the document provided is a forgery. This report is widely published on the internet.

Now, the question arises, is wrongly claiming the Guardianship the only crime that was committed by Shoghi Effendi, or was there more such crimes which generally people don't talk about? Let's us look at "some" of the crimes committed by Shoghi Rabbani which took the faith in another direction altogether, away from the path shown by Baha'u'llah and the Master.

1) **Went against the Master** – Shoghi Effendi, when younger, used to routinely disobey his Grandfather (Abdu'l Baha). After failing in his college at the age of twenty-four (on account of his wayward activities), Shoghi Effendi chose to enroll himself at the Oxford University. This was despite the objections made by the Master.

The Lady Ruth White has noted the following in her book regarding this unfortunate event. "In the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of Abdu'l Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with Abdu'l Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life," (Reference: Ruth White, Abdu'l Baha's Questioned Will and Testament, p 29)

2) **Introduced Fascism to the faith** – Shoghi Effendi brought Fascism to the Faith in such a way that it resembled a society in which a government governed by a dictator controls people's lives and individuals are not permitted to disagree with the government. When you read about the experiences of persons who were close to the Master and working for the Cause all over the world after the Master was requested to report back to the Guardian and cease all operations. Looking at their actions, you can see that they were all committed to the Cause, conveying Baha'u'llah's teachings to the masses. Some of the Baha'is who were subjected to Shoghi Effendi's excommunication decree were Lady Ruth White and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.

3) **Copy Right the Baha'i Religion** – As unbelievable as it may seem, they attempted to copyright the Baha'i Religion, filing two lawsuits in 1941 against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler to prohibit them, or anyone else, from calling themselves Baha'is or spreading the religion unless they did so through their organization and according to their dictates. Naturally the National Spiritual Assembly lost both suits, and they were severely reprimanded by the judge. He made it clear to them that in this day of religious freedom, no one can copyright a religion or claim the exclusive rights to it. Mirza Sohrab and Mrs. Chanler, who are the founders of The New History Society, established to spread the Baha'i teachings, did a great service to mankind, by winning these two suits. They won religious freedom for the Baha'i Movement and broke the stranglehold that the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is had over it, which had impeded its progress. (Reference: Baha'i Leads Out of the Labyrinth by Ruth White)

Abdu'l Baha says, "No one can bottle up the Baha'i Spirit. The Baha'i Spirit is the most illusive ether; it is

here, it is there, it is everywhere. It is the origin and substance of the highest ideals of this and the coming ages. The Baha'i Spirit is undogmatic, super-racial, inter-social and non-partisan. The Baha'i Religion is not an exclusive society, but a Divine congregation, the dome of which is the Infinite Heaven, and the temple of which is the expanse of the earth."

4) **Excommunicating the family of Baha'u'llah** – As per Baha'i teachings, there is to be no clergy or supreme leader / unquestioned commander in the Baha'i faith. But Shoghi Effendi managed or rather ruled the faith as his personal fiefdom. Much akin to a tyrant Pope or a crazy Mollah, he excommunicated the entire family of Abdu'l Baha on frivolous pretexts, like traveling abroad without informing him or for marrying without his permission or even for attending Baha'i gatherings without informing him. While none of these innocent family members of Abdu'l Baha broke the Covenant, what they did break was the ginormous ego of this tyrant "Guardian" which resulted in their excommunication. The true reason for these excommunications was Shoghi Effendi's insecurity about his fragile position and his paranoia which afforded no challengers or questioners to his unchecked authority.

5) **Introduced the concept of election exactly the same as Bolshevism** – The notion of election proposed by Shoghi Effendi in the Baha'i Administration was identical to Bolshevism, the communist system of administration instituted in Russia following the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. All of his techniques, as well as those of the National Spiritual Assembly, are remarkably similar to those of the Soviet government at the time.

Despite the fact that Abdu'l Baha said: "The future is bad…Nations should strive to extinguish this fire (of Bolshevism) so that it would not spread to other countries. It will soon affect other countries…for the mass of people have a Bolshevik tendency." (The Light of the World)

As quoted by Lady Ruth White in her book 'The Baha'i Religion and its Enemy the Baha'i Organization', under Chapter II, "Shoghi Effendi conducts the Baha'i elections in the same manner, and it is more of a farce than that of the Bolsheviks. Like them he studies the roll of the Baha'is and, through a system of espionage, he knows every shade of belief among them. He selects those who lean most favorably towards him, and the voters have no more to say about who is to be elected than the Russian people have under the Soviet regime. And like the Soviet government his chief aim is to suppress man's freedom of conscience. There is no greater violation of the Baha'i teachings than this."

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Thank you for sharing your perspective and insights. It's important to engage in discussions and reflections about faith and its interpretation. If you have any more questions or if there's anything else you'd like to discuss or learn about, feel free to ask.

Regards,
Mark

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 6, Edition 5

“The Eternal Flame of Unity: Remembering the Bab’s Profound Sacrifice”

DID YOU KNOW? : On July 9, 1850, a momentous event unfolded in Tabriz, Persia, forever etching the name of the Bab in the annals of history? The Bab, a radiant soul and the forerunner of the Baha’i Faith, faced a profound and dramatic execution that would leave an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of countless individuals.

As the day dawned, a sense of trepidation filled the air. The Bab, accompanied by his steadfast young follower named Anis, awaited his fate with an unwavering spirit. The authorities, determined to quell the influence of the burgeoning Babi movement, ordered the Bab’s execution by firing squad in the town square of Tabriz.

Amidst the tense atmosphere, a peculiar incident occurred. Sam Khan, the commander of the Armenian regiment entrusted with the task of carrying out the execution, found himself plagued by doubt and inner turmoil. Deeply moved by the Bab’s unwavering faith and his teachings of love and unity, Sam Khan sought forgiveness in advance. “I profess the Christian faith,” he confided to the Bab, “and entertain no ill will against you. If your Cause be the Cause of Truth, enable me to free myself from the obligation to shed your blood.”

The Bab, in his characteristic humility and wisdom, responded with words of solace and assurance. “Follow your instructions,” he gently replied, “And if your intention be sincere, the Almighty is surely able to relieve you from your perplexity.”

The appointed hour arrived, and the muskets roared as the firing squad discharged their weapons. The sound of the volley reverberated through the air, and for a brief moment, a cloud of smoke engulfed the scene. As the smoke cleared, an extraordinary sight awaited the bewildered crowd. The Bab had vanished from sight, while his loyal companion, Anis, stood unscathed at the base of the wall. The ropes that had bound them both lay in tatters, a testament to an inexplicable occurrence.

The crowd gasped in awe and wonder, convinced that they had witnessed a divine miracle. Sam Khan, now released from his perplexity, immediately gave the order for his seven hundred and fifty riflemen to march away. He vowed never again to obey such an order, even if it cost him his own life. The power of the Bab’s presence had touched the heart of this Russian officer, forever transforming his perspective.

However, the unfolding drama was far from over. Another complication arose, as the colonel of the official Tabriz bodyguard volunteered to carry out the execution. Determined to crush the Bab’s influence, the authorities were relentless in their pursuit. Guards were dispatched to retrieve the Bab from his cell, where he peacefully concluded a conversation with his companions. Bound once again, side by side with Anis, the Bab faced his final moments on this earthly plane.

The second firing squad assembled, their resolve unwavering. This time, the bullets found their mark, and the life of the Bab and his loyal companion were tragically extinguished. The bodies, fused and riddled with bullets, were left to rest under the golden dome of the Shrine of the Bab, atop Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel.

Today, millions of people from around the globe embark on pilgrimages to this sacred site, drawn by the spirit and message of the Bab. The Shrine stands as a testament to the transformative power of his teachings —a message of unity, peace, love, and selflessness that resounds through the ages.

The Bab's sacrifice and his steadfast devotion to his cause ignited a flame that would pave the way for the advent of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith. His life and martyrdom serve as a poignant reminder of the enduring resilience of the human spirit and the unyielding power of truth.

So, as we reflect on that fateful day, July 9, 1850, let us honor the memory of the Bab and his unwavering dedication to his divine mission. Let us strive to embrace the ideals of unity, peace, and love that he espoused, and in doing so, contribute to the betterment of ourselves and the world around us.

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 7, Edition 3

The Grandest, Most despised Scam – Guest Article

The most challenging frauds to thwart, according to experts, are those that aim to use your own religion against you out of all the ways scammers might steal your money. They prey on people who have something in common, usually a shared religion. This fraud losses are estimated to reach in the billions of dollars annually, despite the fact that figures are difficult to find due to the schemes' extreme prevalence. A common scam among Haifan Baha'is is huquq'ullah, in which the con artist takes significant sums of money from the faithful without providing any documentation of the money taken or an accounting of the expenses incurred. This has been going on since Huquq'ullah was founded in 1963, but regrettably no one has brought it up or requested accounts from the UHJ. With the exception of the Free Baha'is, who have repeatedly followed up with the UHJ on this topic without success.

Huquq'ullah is a voluntary wealth tax paid by Baha'is to assist the work of the faith. According to the Haifan Baha'is – the largest domination amongst the different Baha'i sects, the UHJ has presided over the faith since 1963 and thus collects all the Huquq'ullah money from the community.

According to Baha'u'llah's teachings, making the Huquq'ullah contribution is regarded as a means of purifying one's income. It should be highlighted that Huquq'ullah is not intended to be a gift but rather God's request for assistance in advancing the needs of all people.

In the Kitab-i-Aqdas, Baha'u'llah introduced the concept of "Huquq'ullah," which is distinct from the general Baha'i funds that the UHJ or NSA/LSA separately collect under various headings. Let us dissect the law of Huquq'ullah from Kitab-i-Aqdas below.

"If anyone possesses a hundred mithqals of gold, nineteen mithqals of them are for God, the Maker of earth and heaven. Beware, O people, lest you deny yourselves this great favour. We have commanded you to do this although We can do without you and without all who are in the heavens and the earths. In that, there are wise and useful things of which no one has acquired knowledge except God, the Omniscient, the Knower. Say: By that command, God desired the purification of your wealth and your drawing near to those stations which are only attained by those whom God wills. Indeed, He is the Generous, Almighty Giver of Grace. O People, do not be dishonest in the duties owed to God; do not spend (God's money) except by His permission. Thus is the matter decided in the Tablets and in this Powerful Tablet. Whoever cheats God is cheated by Justice, but when one does what he is commanded, there descends upon him a blessing from the heaven of giving, from his Lord, the Bountiful, the Giver, the Eternal Bestower. He desires for you that which you do not know today. The People shall know it whenever spirits soar and the rich carpets of joy are folded up. Thus, does he who has a Preserved Tablet remind you."

We can extract three important points regarding Huquq'ullah from the above paragraph:

1.Huquq'ullah is 19% on your savings.

2.It has been made mandatory so that one's wealth gets purified.

3.It has to be spent with the permission of God.

Therefore, we might conclude that Huquq'ullah is being paid by all Baha'is. What would be the amount that the UHJ collects in a year, given that the UHJ doesn't disclose any reports of the entire collection it makes through Huququ'llah? According to the Globe Religion Database, there were 8,531,050 Baha'is in the world

as of 2020. So, if we consider that each Baha'i contributes a bare minimum of 100 dollars (on average) in a year towards Huquq'llah, even then the total would come to $853,105,000 worldwide. But one should also understand the fact that within the Baha'i community, there are various funds that are established at the local, national, continental, and international levels to which its members may alone contribute.

1.Local Fund – It aids with the Local Spiritual Assembly's work and the management of the community's affairs.

2.National Fund – The activity of the National Spiritual Assembly is supported by this fund.

3.International Fund – All the UHJ's work is maintained by this fund. It is employed, among other things, to support the worldwide operations of the Baha'i community and the Baha'i World Center. Every nation, big or small, is urged to contribute a donation to the UHJ. This is in addition to what the NSA contributes towards the UHJ already.

4.Continental Fund – This fund assists the International Teaching Center, the Continental Boards of Counselors, the Auxiliary Boards, and their assistants in their task of propagation and preservation. One should note that UHJ's major task of ITC and propagation is taken care of through this fund, but still, UHJ has to collect another fund under a separate head.

5.Regional fund – This fund is to provide funding for the work of the new Regional Councils. A small contribution for the feast given by everyone.

6.Fund for the Shrine of the Master – This is a brand-new fund that was established following the tragic fire at the Abdu'l Baha Shrine. Everyone had previously been encouraged to donate to the Shrine, but since the accident, there has been a lot more pressure on Baha'is to do so.

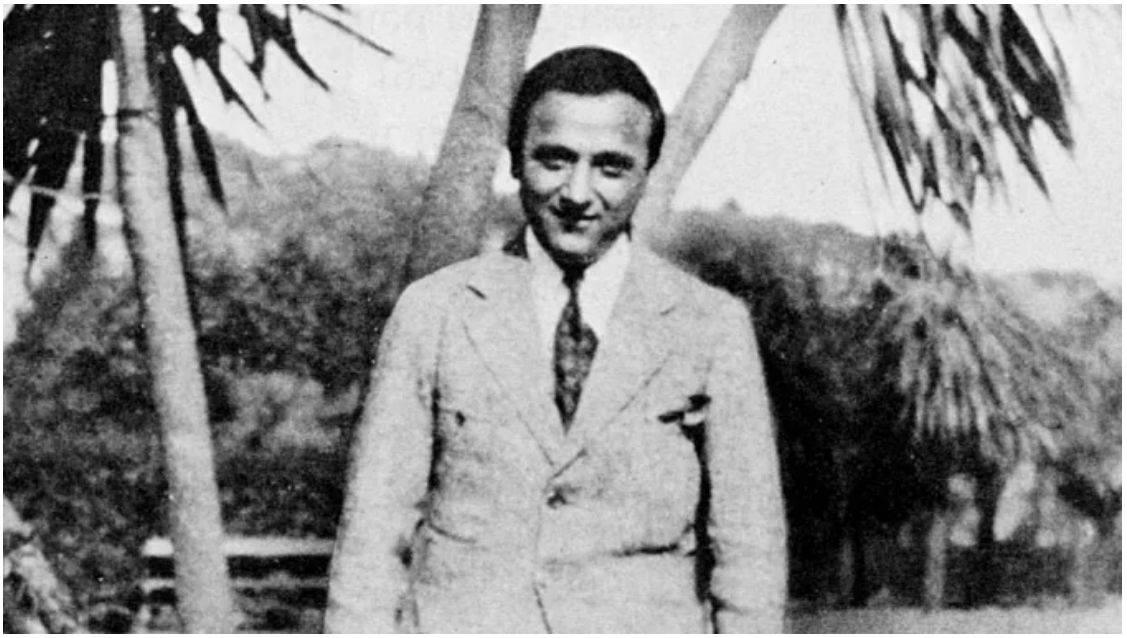
In addition to the Huquq'ullah, the UHJ also raises money under the other headings indicated above, and the majority of Baha'is are required to donate because they are explicitly asked to place their donations in the collection box. So, one must put something in the box in order to avoid shame, correct?

Imagine the sum collected by the UHJ and its other administrative bodies in the name of religion. And icing on the cake is that the Haifan Baha'is are tax exempt in Israel, which means that all of their earnings have been declared tax-free. Being tax-exempt means that no federal, state, or municipal taxes are applied to any of their transactions. In the name of belief and tradition, this may be referred to as an organized swindle

The UHJ and its sister bodies could be asked to provide an annual report or some other type of accounting statement as a way to keep things simple and prevent confusion among Baha'is. After all, they are all responsible to the community because the money raised comes from the contributions of the faithful, who have a right to know how much was raised and how it was spent. Let's unite in our opposition to this apparent fraud activity and put an end to the mistrust that exists between the UHJ, ourselves, and other Baha'is worldwide. Will you continue to ask the UHJ questions regarding Huquq'llah? We will.

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 6, Edition 6

The Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi: Losses and Losses



1-Introduction

After the deaths of the Bab and Baha'u'llah, bitter quarrels regarding the succession arose among the believers. Fortunately on the death of 'Abdu'l Baha no one disputed the succession. This, however, did not indicate that all the followers of Baha'u'llah welcomed the accession of the Guardian, and were ready to obey him. In the early years of the rule of 'Abdu'l Baha, most of the members of the family of Baha'u'llah vigorously protested against what they considered unlawful assumption of authority on the family members.

2-Shoghi Effendi did not shared the contributions with his family members

The honour of being Guardian was not an empty one, for in his Will Abdul-Baha arranged that his grandson should be well provided for financially. In the Kitab-i-Aqdas Baha'u'llah had commanded (1) that believers pay to God a 19% "Purification Tax" on capital funds (gold). This money was to be expended only as Baha'u'llah permitted. The payment of this tax lapsed at the death of Baha'u'llah, for in his Will he stipulated, "God has not decreed for the Branches [Baha's sons] a right in one's property."(2) However, in this matter as well as in others, Abdul-Baha disregarded his father's Will, claimed this tax for himself (in addition to the voluntary offerings of believers), (3) and in his own Will commanded (4) that "a fixed money offering (Huquq'u'llah, 'the rights of God') to paid to the guardian of the Cause of God, that it may be expended for the diffusion of the Fragrances of God and the exaltation of His Word, for benevolent pursuits and for the common weal." This provision was omitted from the Excerpts from the Will printed in the Baha'i World 1928-1928.

It is reported on good authority that Shoghi Effendi kept all the income for his plans and purposes, and failed to share it with other members of the family of 'Abdu'l Baha, who kept quiet lest they "make a breach in the Cause of God." (5)

3-Shoghi Effendi excommunicates every member of his family

It seems that Shoghi Effendi, pleading inability to enter upon the duties of his office forthwith, retired into solitude for several years after his return to Haifa, leaving the management of Baha'i affairs in the hands of the older members of the family of Abdul- Baha. Bahiyya Khanum, the "Supreme Leaf," the daughter of Baha'u'llah" who had remained loyal to her brother, became the "titular head" of the movement, while Munira Khanum, the grandmother of Shoghi Effendi, who had induced her husband to make him the Guardian and successor, was the power behind the throne. (6)

After a time, however, Shoghi Effendi began to realize the extent of the authority vested in him by the Will of Abdul-Baha, (7) came forth from his seclusion, and proceeded to exercise his power as Guardian of the Cause. Acting in accordance with the provisions of the Will, he "took over the reins of the Baha'i Administration, and demanded ready and implicit obedience from the servants of God, in default of which any servant of God was liable to excommunication or summary expulsion from the faith under some pretence or pretext.... His decisions were absolute and final, and his words authoritative."(8)

It is not surprising that this policy brought the Guardian into conflict not only with numerous believers but also with the members of his own family, and resulted in their excommunication. The first person to be purged by Shoghi Effendi was his grandmother Munira Khanum, wife of Abdul-Baha, the first lady of the Baha'i realm, to whom the Guardian, to a considerable extent, was indebted for his position. (9)

Later all the members of Abdul-Baha's family, his daughters, his descendants, his sons-in-law, the brothers and sisters of Shoghi Effendi, and last of all his own parents were excommunicated. (10)

Riyadh Rabbani, a younger brother of the Guardian, has stated (11) that he for years had assisted Shoghi Effendi in his work. Then when Shoghi excommunicated his parents he called upon Riyadh to make a choice between him and his parents. Riyadh decided to side with his parents" whereupon he was rejected by his brother. It seems that Shoghi Effendi's family accepted this severe discipline without resistance, for to whom could they appeal for redress?

4-Shoghi Effendi usurps the custodianship from Mirza Muhammad Ali

Several quarrels, however, took place at the center of the Cause, one of which was over the custodianship of the shrine of Baha'u'llah in Akka. While 'Abdu'l Baha lived, he in accordance with Muslim law as eldest son had the responsibility for his father's grave. When he died the custodianship should have gone according to law to Baha'u'llah's eldest surviving son Mirza Muhammad Ali. Not' long after his accession to the Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi ordered the caretaker of the shrine to refuse entrance to certain people. Then the keys were taken from the caretaker by someone, and handed to the legal custodian Mirza Muhammad Ali, and neither the American Baha'is who intervened nor the British High Commissioner were able to dispossess Mirza Muhammad Ali of his rights. Shoghi Effendi could not go to court over this, for the Will of his grandfather which appointed him Guardian had not been probated, Finally, Shoghi Effendi approached the British District Commissioner, and he sent his Arab assistant who was on friendly terms with both parties to arrange a settlement out of court. This was done, the keys were turned over to Shoghi Effendi, and Muhammad Ali and his partisans were allowed free access to the tomb of Baha'u'llah, without let or hindrance. (12)

5-The Daughter of Mirza Badiullah denied entry into the Tomb

Many years later in 1952 the daughter of Mirza Badi'u'llah, Mrs. Qamar Bahai, went to Akka accompanied by a friend, and attempted to visit the tomb of her grandfather Baha'u'llah the caretaker employed by Shoghi Effendi was rude to them, and denied them entrance to the shrine. Whereupon Mrs. Bahai brought an action in the Israeli District Court in Haifa against Shoghi Effendi, to show cause why she was denied access to the tomb of her grandfather. She appeared in court in person accompanied by her counsel. Shoghi Effendi did not appear, but was represented by his counsel and two American Baha'is. The President of the Court, in an effort to settle the matter out of court, took Mrs. Bahai into his office and asked her if she would meet Shoghi Effendi for an amicable settlement, and she agreed. But to the great surprise of the President of the Court, the two American Baha'is rejected the proposal. Finally, the matter was referred to the Minister for Religious Affairs in the Israeli Government, who called in the parties separately, and worked out a settlement, whereby free access to the shrine, without let or hindrance, was granted to all members of the family of Baha'u'llah, and to this both parties subscribed. (13)

6-The house of Mirza Muhammad Ali usurped by Shoghi Effendi

During the lifetime of Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l Baha and his family had resided in the town of Akka, while his brothers and their families had lived in the Bahji Palace several miles from Akka near their father. After the death of Baha'u'llah they continued to live there, owning undivided shares in the property, but without the income, which 'Abdu'l Baha received, they were unable to keep this large property in good repair. When Shoghi Effendi became the head of the Baha'i Cause, he naturally felt it was important for him to control all the sacred sites. He, therefore, proposed to Mirza Muhammad Ali that he and the others move out of the Palace to nearby buildings that Shoghi might repair the Palace, and this was done. When they moved out they took with them the household equipment that they had been using, and Shoghi Effendi replaced this. (14) Thus the Palace also became a place of pilgrimage for Baha'is.

7-Shoghi Effendi was interested more in novels

Simple events and incidents are distorted and misrepresented in the furtherance of private ends and personal ambitions. The cases treated in these pages [of God Passes By] are glaring examples of misrepresentations of historical facts." It was said that. Shoghi Efendi when a student in Beirut was very fond of reading novels, and God Passes By should be considered an historical novel rather than authentic history.

In reading this book one is disappointed to find that the guardian of a Cause which has professed allegiance to peace and 1ove and world-brotherhood and absence of any sort of prejudice should have expressed such bitterness toward many of the members of his own family. He refers (15) to Baha'u'llah's second son Mirza Muhammad Ali as "the Prime Mover of sedition," he speaks of the third and fourth sons as "the vacillating Mirza Ziya'u'llah and the treacherous Mirza Badi'u'llah," (16) and he calls the sons-in-law of Baha'u'llah "infamous" and "crafty."

8-Shoghi Effendi excommunicates his brother in law (Sayed Ali Nayyar Afnan)

In his Messages also the Guardian sometimes condemned with great severity those who differed with him. The cable from Shoghi Efendi addressed to the Baha'is of the United States, which was printed in Baha'i News, No. 256, and dated April 15, 1952, a part of which will be quoted below, is a sample of his style. In this Message the Guardian announced the death in Haifa of Sayyid Ali Nayyir Afnan, a grandson of Baha'u'llah,

and husband of Shoghi's eldest sister Ruhangez. It is said that Sayyid Ali "had a charming personality," and associated with, and befriended, men of all walks of life." He expressed himself strongly as being opposed to the Guardian's policy of rejecting anyone who did not fully agree with him, and as result he was himself excommunicated (Azal's Notes, p. 1107) The 300-word cable begins thus: (17)

God's Avenging Wrath

"Inform National Assemblies (that) God's avenging wrath…. (has) now struck down….Sayyid Ali Nayer Afnan, pivot (of) Machinations, connecting link (between) old (and) new Covenant-breakers. "This alone (will) reveal extent (of) havoc wreaked (by) this virus (of) violation- injected, fostered over two decades (in) Abdul Baha's family….(who) was repeatedly denounced by Center (of the) Covenant (as) his chief enemy……"

FOOTNOTES:-

1. Aqdas, pp. 50, 51.
2. Azal's Notes, p. 316.
3. Ibid., pp. 50, 51.
4. Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l Baha, Lancaster, Penna., p. 15.
5. Azal's Notes, p. 52.
6. Azal's Notes, p. 46
7. Baha'i World 1956-1928, Vol. II, p. 85.
8. Azal's Notes, p. 47.
9. Ibid., pp. 440-442.
10. Ibid., pp. 53, 98, 340, 441-443, 680. One well acquainted with the Situation has stated that the chief cause of these unhappy family Divisions were "the love of money."
11. Ibid., p. 680.
12. Azal's notes, pp. 91, 92, God Passes By, p. 356
13. Azal's Notes, pp. 92, 93.
14. Azal's notes, pp. 341, 342, God Passes By, p. 356 .
15. God Passes By, p. 247.
16. Mirza Badi'u'llah died in Haifa on November 12, 1950, aged 82.
17. See Appendix II, #71.

The Hollow Trunk of the Administration in Thailand

Many years ago, there was an interesting video circulating online. It showed a man casually attempting to lean against a coconut tree when suddenly the tree collapsed, much to the shock of this poor fellow. Upon closer inspection, the man found that the tree was actually a hollow shell with a rotten inside, and the moment he put pressure on it, the hollow trunk collapsed. The video was quite a spectacle.

We Baha'is often use analogies comparing our faith to a tree with its Holy Branches and Semi-Holy Twigs, etc. I thought the above-mentioned anecdote fits the Baha'is of Thailand perfectly. The administration, with the help of their self-made Guardian and the administrative body, has very well made the tree hollow from the inside. From the outside, or let me say, on paper, it is a large towering tree, albeit with a hollow and rotten core.

The Haifan community in Thailand is an old one, with many a picture of the initial NSA members sitting with Ruhiyyih Khanum in 1964. The World Christian encyclopaedia [WCE] counted about 10,000 Adherents in

Thailand in the year 1980 a mere 15 years since the formation of the NSA. That would definitely be a success. And then the WCE Counts about 144,000 Adherents in the Year 2000 showing phenomenal Growth of about 1300% in 2 decades.

But was this growth true, or was it only on paper? The WCE very famously (at least for the Haifans) publishes data that the Administration themselves provide to them. And for the Administration or the UHJ – they never let facts and true figures come in the way of a good growth story!

This Baha'i charade starts collapsing on itself when the numbers don't begin to tally. With the advancement of communication and other mechanisms for primary verification now available, the Association of Religious Data Archives (ARDA) estimated in the year 2020 that the number of Baha'is in Thailand had halved to about 66,000, which is a massive decline compared to the year 2000.

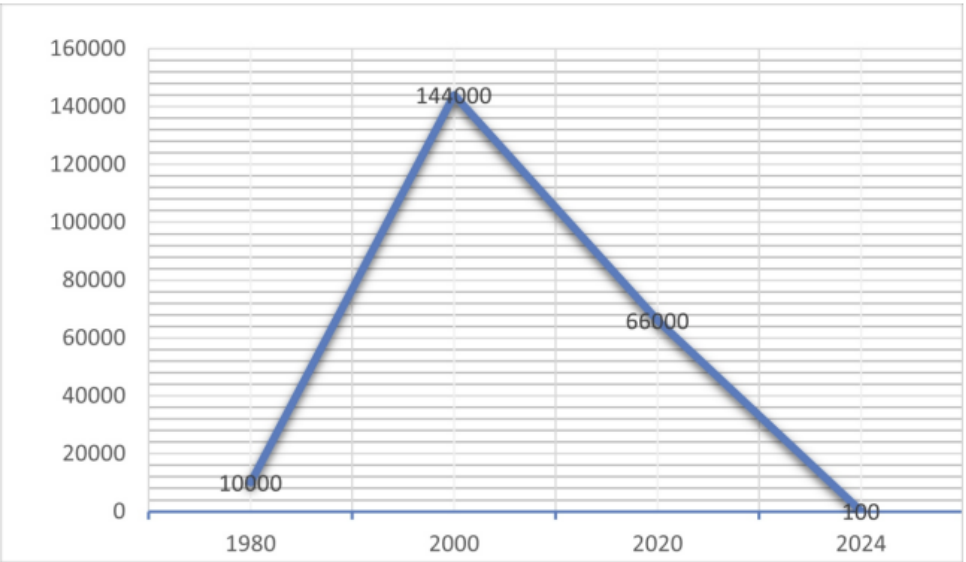
Exit by Troops? Perhaps! And I'm not at all surprised when the faith has moved farther away from the pristine teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Master.

Most of this data comes from representatives of the UHJ, disguising themselves as non-Baha'is (for example, Mr. Rabbani, a Haifan, providing Baha'i data to the World Christian Encyclopedia), and there will never be any official Baha'i sources for confirming the data, obviously because they know the truth.

In Thailand, however, one can surely consider the testimony of Baha'is of Thailand as the correct figures. There have been recent reports coming from Thailand about the virtually non-existent Haifan Baha'i Community. Discussions between a recently migrated expat and a senior member of the Thai Baha'i community pointed out that there are only about 10 faithful in Bangkok and about 100 faithful in all of Thailand. Consequently, the NDFs are usually a single-digit affair, and the Naw-Ruz and Ridvan celebrations a double-digit one. No, I'm not at all surprised. This has been the case across different regions, and the US is one such example where right after the ascension of the Master, there was a major vacuum of people in the community. Some joined the Free Baha'is along with Lady Ruth White, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, and others. So, this has been the case since Shoghi Effendi has taken over the Faith in his hand through force and the alleged Will of the Master. The wrong will always be wrong, regardless of attempts to prove its truthfulness.

Today, local communities are rife with discussion about this tragic, or rather, expected loss of faithful. It is now commonplace to circulate photos of empty gatherings as a form of a last emotional appeal to the Haifans to show up (if they even exist!). However, more sinister undertones to such discussions cannot be completely discounted..

Tallying the population date in the form of a line chart reveals the following shock –



A Visual representation of the Population Growth of Haifan Baha'is in Thailand

This leaves us with some very important questions in mind

Was the data falsified all along from 1980 till date to show inflated figures by the NSA of Thailand for its generally corrupt reasons?

OR

If the data is accepted at face value, does this show the massive crash and complete and utter annihilation of the faithful of Thailand?

If yes – how?

Some Baha'is of Thailand themselves attribute this decline to the spiritually devoid mish-mash Ruhi Curriculum. Some of them blame it on the writing skills of Baha'i report writers trained by the Muhajirs and Arbabs clan. Others blame it on the strategic plans of the members sitting in Haifa to show acceptance of the Baha'i Faith by the masses.

The bottom line is that many are now finally willing to acknowledge that the grand tree of the Haifan sect in Thailand is now hollow and rotten, and it will likely take one push to finally bring it down.

I am sure that in response to this crisis of faith in Thailand, the House of Justice will only issue, as always, lovingly rhetorical words – hence fittingly called the House of Empty Rhetoric, which will only further aid in the decay. Meanwhile, the faithful of Thailand will keep circulating photographs of empty gatherings amongst themselves, wondering what went wrong.

In the end, thoughts and prayers on this tragic loss from the entire Free Baha'is community!

Source: Free Baha'is of Thailand

The (Lip) Service of the Baha'i Administration at the time of the Covid-19 crises

Today, Humanity is at a critical juncture faced with the unprecedented and unexpected calamity in the form of the Covid-19 Pandemic. In the face of this crisis, Nations, Organisations, communities and even individuals are engaged in selfless service trying to help their fellow human beings' tide over the devastating effects of this pandemic. Nations are rising over past rivalries and animosities, and people are rising over racism and xenophobia to help each other.

However, in the face of all of this, the "Baha'i Administration" is doing, as usual, NOTHING MEANINGFUL. The "Administration", as always, in this time of crisis is bent on paying lip service and nothing more. This way of dumb and mute service is the innate nature of the "Baha'i Administration" and is in perfect alignment with the past set precedents of service of the "Administration".

Allow me to enumerate the various "Powerful" (read: self-serving and futile; Lip Service) steps which the "Administration" will take at this time of crisis

1. The various secretaries of the Local Spiritual Assemblies will write flowery reports, elaborating in detail each small action done by the individual Baha'is (branded as the LSA's effort) while exaggerating the same to appear as a humungous effort on part of the LSA. This is while in reality the individual Baha'is themselves are encouraged to do good not for humanity but for LSA reports where each activity in counted. One LSA report states about their dilemma where the Baha'is are asking them for guidance as to how they should serve the community during these dire times! As if any sane person needs guidance on that!!!

The Secretaries of the LSA's know very well that promotion in the Baha'i administrative order is very much tied to one's capacity at writing attractive reports.

- The National Spiritual Assemblies will then collect all of these puff pieces to assemble a massive report which will be nothing but a whole lot of blarney. All NSA's are supposed to be masters in exaggerating the already exaggerated. The reality here is that the re-election of all of these "serving" members of LSA and NSAs depends on these rubbish reports and exaggerations. The secretary of the NSAs will then forwards these reports to the world centre which will then generate a very holy sounding poetic statement which would sound something like this: –

"In city after city, village after village, we see that a greater consciousness of our common humanity is emerging among many people. This is spurring them on to help others and to transcend traditional barriers and prejudices that keep them apart. The Baha'i communities together with local organizations and institutions are raising awareness about the corona virus disease (COVID-19)."

- The next step in their self-serving Lip Service at this time of crisis would be to send out correspondences to figures of authority in various countries (like the office of the Prime Minister etc). This work comes under the purview of the External Affairs Committee of the NSA and is the most important assignment for all of the NSAs worldwide. In these letters/ correspondences the NSAs will express their sympathies and solidarity with the government in this crisis while emphasising that they are all obeying the respective

directives given by the said government but without ever explicitly specifying how “they” are going to help.

Because in reality they have no intention of helping and the purpose of sending such a letter is much more sinister. What they in fact desire is a response (which is usually issued to all organisations which write to these august offices) from these figures in authority thanking them for their sympathies which will then be used by the administration to publicise their “Achievement” worldwide – That the Bahai’s have received welcoming and appreciating letters from Heads of States – As if the religion of Baha’u’llah needs validation from them.

While not always, often it has also been seen that a whisper campaign is then started to spread malicious news that such and such head of state is now a Baha’i and is hiding his true beliefs fearing public repercussion – proof of which is a polite letter of thanks written by them (simply audacious)

- The NSAs will then start asking for money from the ordinary Baha’is (whom they fondly refer to as sheep) and from other organisations. Of these monies a very small percentage actually makes its way to relief activities (and the NSAs feel no need to publish statistics regarding how many cents to a dollar is actually spent towards relief activities) but not before the “Administration” will very shamefully make it into a photo-op, usually with Government officials involved , for worldwide circulation, to show acceptance of the Baha’i faith.
- And Lastly there is section of the “Administration” called as the Kamalabadi Baha’is who will take great pride in labelling this occasion of misfortune as the revenge of Baha’u’llah on Humanity. They will in fact label all that befalls humanity as the revenge of Baha’u’llah since Humanity has not accepted the message of Baha’u’llah, in their sordid thinking, it is then necessary for Baha’u’llah to take revenge from humanity by involving it in harsh punishments.

This kind of thinking originates from a mind which has suffered years of spiritual rot at the hands of the Administration. Such statements of hate and acting like spokespersons for Baha’u’llah comes naturally to them since they have for long left the true teachings of Baha’u’llah and have adopted false ideas, false systems and false “Administrations” as authorities over them.

I believe that it is the moral responsibility of all true Baha’is to condemn these Kamalabadi Baha’is who find solace in the Misfortune of others (including the many Baha’i who have been affected by this).

Alas, But in these times of tribulations and crisis, it seems that the chosen ones of Baha’u’llah, us Baha’is appear to be the most lost all because of this false “Administration” which does service only when it is self-service and helps only when it needs help in return. And all of this grand charade of service (Lip Service) by the “Administration” at the time of crises is only a means of marking their presence and safeguarding their relevance in our society.

Thank you.

A pained Baha’i

……

Source: https://australiabahais.wordpress.com/2020/06/07/the-lip-service-of-the-bahai-administration-at-the-time-of-the-covid-19-crises/

The Real Betrayer: How Shoghi Effendi Destroyed the Baha'i Faith

The history of the Baha'i Faith, which started with the noble vision of Baha'u'llah to unite humanity under a banner of love, unity, and spiritual enlightenment, took a dark turn with the rise of Shoghi Effendi. While Baha'u'llah's teachings were centered on the betterment of humankind, Shoghi Effendi's actions warped those teachings into a system of control, hierarchy, and political maneuvering that veered far from Baha'u'llah's original intent.

Shoghi Effendi: A Manipulator, Not a Guardian

Shoghi Effendi, who named himself the "Guardian" of the Baha'i Faith, wielded his position not to protect or uphold the Faith, but to consolidate power around himself. While Baha'u'llah's message was one of spiritual freedom, Shoghi Effendi created structures designed to silence dissent and centralize control, particularly through his iron-fisted approach to the Baha'i administrative order.

Under Shoghi's rule, a system of absolute obedience was developed, alienating many faithful who sought to follow Baha'u'llah's original teachings of inclusiveness and spiritual autonomy. By dictating rigid adherence to institutional authority and expelling anyone who questioned him, Shoghi turned the Baha'i Faith from an open spiritual community into an authoritarian regime.

The Breakdown of Spirituality

Shoghi Effendi destroyed what should have been the natural growth of Baha'u'llah's teachings by reducing the Faith to a mechanical institution. Instead of focusing on spreading the message of universal love and unity, Shoghi emphasized bureaucracy, cold administrative control, and strict interpretation of teachings, which stifled the vibrancy of Baha'u'llah's vision. His leadership diminished the spirituality of the community, emphasizing ritualistic practices over genuine spiritual development.

Baha'u'llah spoke about the need for independent investigation of the truth, a principle that encourages free thought and personal growth. Under Shoghi, however, this idea was systematically suppressed. Shoghi Effendi demanded conformity and punished those who dared to think critically or engage with Baha'u'llah's teachings in new ways.

The Creation of the Haifan Administrative Order

One of Shoghi Effendi's most damaging legacies is the creation of the Haifan Baha'i Administrative Order, which serves more as a political tool than a spiritual one. This administrative body, formed under Shoghi's watchful eye, became the ruling entity over the Baha'i community. The Universal House of Justice (UHJ), which was institutionalized later, traces its oppressive tactics back to Shoghi's manipulations.

The Baha'i Faith, which was once about spreading unity, had now become obsessed with consolidating power. This led to an inner circle of leadership that became inaccessible to the ordinary believer, creating a hierarchy that Baha'u'llah would have never approved of. The Free Baha'is have long criticized this evolution, as it betrays the very heart of Baha'u'llah's message. Shoghi Effendi laid the foundation for this exclusionary, elitist approach.

Shoghi's Authoritarian Approach

Shoghi Effendi's reign was marked by authoritarianism. He used excommunication as a weapon to silence critics and expelled numerous individuals who refused to bow to his will. His harsh treatment of dissenters and his intolerance for different interpretations of Baha'u'llah's teachings fractured the Faith and drove away sincere followers. Instead of promoting unity, he fostered division, branding any independent thinker as a covenant-breaker.

Free Baha'is believe that this behavior runs directly counter to Baha'u'llah's teachings, which emphasized kindness, love, and consultation. Baha'u'llah envisioned a faith where believers could freely express their views, but Shoghi twisted this into a faith where questioning was seen as a crime.

The Faith Needs Revival

The Free Baha'is view Shoghi Effendi's legacy as one of betrayal. Rather than safeguarding the Baha'i Faith, Shoghi distorted it for personal power and control, creating an institution obsessed with political dominance rather than spiritual development. By focusing on hierarchy, excommunication, and control, he led the Baha'i community far away from Baha'u'llah's original teachings. It's time to return to Baha'u'llah's true message—a message of love, unity, and spiritual freedom. Free Baha'is stand for this return, free from the oppressive structures and authoritarian legacy left by Shoghi Effendi. The Baha'i Faith, in its purest form, is one of joy and personal discovery, and it's our responsibility to ensure that vision lives on.

Reference : The Caravan Vol 8 , Edition 5

The Rights of God – Huququ'llah

By God! In earthly riches fear is hidden and peril is concealed…

Dearly-loved Friends,

One of the spiritual responsibilities of the followers of Baha'ullah is to observe the Huququ'llah (the Rights of God), a law requiring the payment of 19% of total savings from the annual income of a Baha'i's work, trade, or crop, if it exceeds the value of 19 mithqals of Gold.

The Blessed Beauty has acknowledged the payment of Huququ'llah in Kitab-i Aqdas, as a means of increasing blessings and bounty, and to cause kindness in different respects.

Various NSAs, in assistance with the trustees of the Board of Huquq'u'llah, hold regular meetings on to encourage the Friends to pay the Huquq'ullah, and to plan for its receipt.

They also intend to encourage those among the youth who are employed and possess particular skills to pay the Huququ'llah.

We should all observe the following issues regarding the very important status of the Huququ'llah.

1. According to Kitab-i Aqdas, payment of the right of God is a private and personal affair. No one is permitted to ask for it. No one is allowed to insist upon its payment. Therefore, to hold meetings, public invitations for the Friends, and any such planning for the receiving of the Huququ'llah from the Friends, etc.; all such activities that the USNSA is engaging in, is not in compliance with the Baha'i Revelations.

2. Bahaullah, in His tablet, Lisan-e-Huzur (The Language of Presence) has prohibited the attempt to own, collect, or partially/wholly consume the Huququ'llah, without the permission of the authority of the Cause.

Abdul-Baha, in his Will and Testament, has clearly specified that "*only the Guardian is the right authority of the Cause, and future Guardians will be the sole lawful recipients of the Huququ'llah.*"

Moreover, in the "Nazar-i Ejmali Bar dianat-i-Bahai" (an Introduction to the Bahai Faith, written By Ahmad Yazdani), the contents of which were approved and confirmed by the beloved Guardian, we read the following:

Payment of the Huququ'llah is a religious obligation; but none is authorized to ask for its payment. It will be collected by the trustee of the Huququ'llah, and will be submitted to the Guardian in every era, the sanctified reference and authority of the Baha'i Cause. And it will be utilized according to his decision.

(A. Yazdani, Nazar-i-Ejmali, p81, no. 29,105 B.E. [1948])

The Universal House of Justice, despite its position in the Baha'i Faith is not allowed to receive the Huququ'llah. Only Shoghi Effendi during his own lifetime, and the Guardians that were supposed to follow him were authorized to receive and spend Huququ'llah according to the **forged** will and testament of Master.

3. The UHJ, during its more than 50 years of activity, has not provided any annual or periodic bill, for the large and frequent amounts received as donations, compensation, Huququ'llah, properties of the heirless deceased, etc., from Baha'is worldwide.

This lack of transparency in the financial affairs of the UHJ will lead to severe mistrust. It will also lead to accusations of the misappropriation of funds, accusations like the following: that such large amounts were used for expanding the already overly-bureaucratic Baha'i administration, for payments to the Elective branch of the Baha'i administration, for the salaries of the 150 staff members of USNSA, or other unnecessary expenses, rather than towards public welfare, charity, or promotion of the word of God.

I sincerely invite the beloved Baha'i Friends to investigate this law and avoid paying their Huquq to unauthorized institution. Instead I suggest to spend it yourselves according to the guidelines prescribed by the Blessed Beauty and his rightful Successor. Everyone of us is a Guardian of the Cause of God. Let us guard the "Right of God" against going in the wrong hands.

Sincerely Yours,

A. Tavekkoli

(This article was published in The Caravan Magazine, Volume 2, Edition 6)

THE SCANDALOUS DEATH OF SHOGHI EFFENDI: A REPORT

Shoghí Effendí Rabbání (March 1, 1897 – November 4, 1957), better known as Shoghi Effendi, was the Guardian and appointed head of the Bahá'í Faith from 1921 until his death in 1957.

After the death of Abdu'l Baha in 1921, Shoghi Effendi was referred to as the Guardian of the faith by the Haifan Bahais. After his death, the Universal House of Justice took over both as the executive and legislative authority of the faith.

Subsequently, attempts were made to answer the question of, change of a century old tradition of, guardianship multiple times with varied explanations by the Universal House of Justice.

Shoghi Effendi in his last and crucial moments was left alone by his wife Ruhiyya Maxwell Khanum who was attending to some business in the United Kingdom.

Although, it is widely believed within popular circles that he had a bout of the Avian flu which ultimately resulted into his passing away from this world, a look at the death certificate says otherwise. The death certificate explicitly illustrates the cause of death as coronary thrombosis. It may be observed that the cause of death on the certificate is endorsed by a County Coroner (of City of Marylebone – An area at the west end of London) after a thorough post mortem.

In order to understand the significance of the death certificate, it would be apt to take a look at the procedures of death registration in the United Kingdom as illustrated in the following paragraphs.

“

3. When a death is reported to a coroner

A doctor may report the death to a coroner if the:

- cause of death is unknown
- death was violent or unnatural
- death was sudden and unexplained
- person who died was not visited by a medical practitioner during their final illness
- medical certificate isn't available
- person who died wasn't seen by the doctor who signed the medical certificate within 14 days before death or after they died
- death occurred during an operation or before the person came out of anaesthetic
- medical certificate suggests the death may have been caused by an industrial disease or industrial poisoning

The coroner may decide that the cause of death is clear. In this case:

1. The doctor signs a medical certificate.
2. You take the medical certificate to the registrar.
3. The coroner issues a certificate to the registrar stating a post-mortem isn't needed.

Post-mortems

The coroner may decide a post-mortem is needed to find out how the person died. This can be done either in a hospital or mortuary.

You can't object to a coroner's post-mortem – but if you've asked the coroner must tell you (and the person's GP) when and where the examination will take place.

"

- Post his death, a General Practitioner or GP (Doctor) was called in to certify his death as is the practice in most parts of the world. Upon initial examination and visual inspection, the GP decided to report the death to a coroner for further investigation and did not issue a death certificate since prima facie from the look of it; it seemed that his death was under very suspicious circumstances (refer extract from https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/when-a-death-is-reported-to-a-coroner . So violent / unnatural state was the corpse in that medical personnel could not identify its gender, see para ahead). This is inferred from the extracts above as well as diary entries extracted from "findmypast" and that reporting of the death to the coroner itself casts a question as to the circumstances that preceded his death. Not only this, we can find references all over historical articles available on this subject that leads us to infer that the corpse was somehow heavily mutilated and Shoghi Effendi died a suspicious and mysterious death that was concealed at all points by all those most near to him.

- The said diary entries of this death made by the authorities from GP reports as accessed in "*find my past records service* – UK" show the gender of Shoghi as "Unknown". It is surprising that a doctor could not ascertain the gender of Shoghi Effendi upon initial examination and visual inspection. This clearly indicates that either his body was heavily mutilated or it indicated characteristics exhibited by eunuchs.

- Thereafter, reaffirming these questions raised by the GP as to the nature of circumstances preceding the death, the coroner chose to perform an autopsy (or a post mortem). The report of this post mortem infers that Shoghi died of coronary thrombosis although the popular belief amongst members of Baha'i faith is that he died of Avian flu.

  https://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/when-a-death-is-reported-to-a-coroner

- It is worth quoting a testimony of one of many eminent observers present at the time of demise of Shoghi Effendi viz. Mayson Reymey. He was not only present but has also made a mention of accounts of the state of the corpse as well as sheds some light on the circumstances surrounding his death. He says and I quote –

"But they separated the viscera of the body of the Guardian, and put it in the shroud for a few days; so, it was completely rotten and His holy body had become very dangerous and intolerable, so that no one could recognize him. It was then when we arrived in London. The Holy Corpse was then placed in a bronze and lead box to avoid further damage to it! While no one was aware of the events that had taken place, and the only report Ruhiyyih Khanum gave was during putting the Holy Corpse in the lead box, which was filled with flowers, and she stated that everything was fragrant."

(Notes and Memories by Yadullah Thabit Rasikh – Nashebo Faraz, Chapter 5)

- A glance at the death certificate issued by the city of Marylebone – London for Shoghi Effendi will be proof enough for anyone that he did indeed die of coronary thrombosis. Post his death, the body got into such a state before anyone attended to it that it required a postmortem before laws of the land permitted disposal of the same. Even so, the Baha'i Administration has gone overdrive in trying to cover this up by spreading rumours of the Avian flu. It seems that there is something associated with the death of Shoghi effendi that they are trying to hide although the pursuit of truth always prevails at the end.

- One can observe the discrepancy of gender as mentioned in the diary entry (that says gender unknown) and the death certificate issued subsequently. This is simply because the find my past records rely on entries made by medical personell and authorities whereas the death certificate includes information supplied by the person applying for it (viz. his wife Ruhiyya Maxwell Khanum)

- The death of this guardian Shoghi Effendi ended the chain of guardianship against the prophesies of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. All the above points intrigues the reader to investigate further into why so much mystery surrounds the death of this one person who is likely the last popular guardian before Baha'i Administration hijacked the faith? Most likely, all this point out to the forging of the will and testament that the master has beforementioned many a times to the benefit of the current day administration.

The UHJ's Silence a Betrayal of Baha'i Principles?

In recent times, the ongoing tragedies unfolding in Gaza and Lebanon have brought immense suffering and sorrow to the global community. People of conscience worldwide, regardless of religious affiliation, have raised their voices against the violence and its devastating impact on civilian lives. From the Free Baha'i perspective, there is a deep emphasis on upholding our shared humanity and expressing a firm, compassionate stance against oppression, violence, and injustice.

Yet, amidst these turbulent times, the silence of the official Baha'i institutions on the civilian suffering in Gaza and Lebanon has been unsettling. This silence appears to contrast with the teachings of Baha'u'llah, which emphasize universal love, compassion, and an unwavering dedication to justice. The absence of public statements from Baha'i institutions, coupled with a perceived focus on proselytization over active efforts to foster peace, raises questions about the alignment of the administrative Baha'i approach with the ethical foundation of the faith.

The recent statement from the Universal House of Justice (UHJ) underscores this concern. Rather than offering clear expressions of empathy or calls for immediate peace, the UHJ's message appears focused on expanding Baha'i membership as the eventual solution to global conflict. While their vision of a future "Great Peace" may have noble intentions, it is not an adequate response to the immediate crises affecting human lives today. Such a passive stance can easily be interpreted as indifference or even complicity in the face of suffering, further isolating the Baha'i community from the broader humanitarian response required at this time.

From our perspective within the Free Baha'i movement, we feel it is critical to affirm that Baha'u'llah's message was never intended to be exclusionary or indifferent to the suffering of others. His teachings encourage active, compassionate engagement in the world to promote peace and alleviate suffering. This is why we, as Free Baha'is, choose to stand in solidarity with all those suffering in Gaza and Lebanon and join those who advocate for immediate humanitarian efforts and meaningful dialogues to resolve the conflicts peacefully.

To counteract the perception of silence or indifference, we propose that Baha'i communities actively engage with humanitarian and interfaith organizations that promote peace, justice, and empathy. Building bridges

with groups from diverse backgrounds, including Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and secular NGOs, can foster mutual respect and understanding. Furthermore, it is essential for Baha'i leaders to clearly denounce violence, actively support humanitarian relief, and communicate compassionately with affected communitie

Addressing the impact of the Baha'i administration's silence is not only a matter of restoring the faith's image but also of adhering to the true spirit of Baha'u'llah's teachings. We call on all religious leaders, including Baha'i institutions, to join in a unified message of peace and justice that transcends differences, focusing on our shared values as human beings.

In closing, the Free Baha'i community urges all people of faith to reflect deeply on how they can contribute meaningfully to a world where peace and justice prevail. Silence, in the face of human suffering, risks enabling oppression and injustice. Let us reaffirm our commitment to Baha'u'llah's vision of universal peace by taking active steps to promote healing and reconciliation today.

Only through genuine compassion, tangible action, and unwavering support for justice can we hope to build a future that truly reflects the principles of the Baha'i faith and offers hope to the suffering communities in Gaza, Lebanon, and beyond.

-A Free Baha'i from Singapore

The UHJ's Silence: A Betrayal of Baha'i Principles?

In recent times, the ongoing tragedies unfolding in Gaza and Lebanon have brought great suffering and sorrow to the global community. People of conscience around the world, regardless of religious affiliation, have raised their voices in opposition to the violence and the devastating impact on civilian lives. From the Free Baha'i perspective, we deeply feel the importance of upholding our shared humanity and expressing a firm, compassionate stance against oppression, violence, and injustice.

Yet, amidst these turbulent times, the silence of the official Baha'i institutions on the civilian suffering in Gaza and Lebanon has been unsettling. This silence contrasts with the teachings of Baha'u'llah, which emphasize universal love, compassion, and an unyielding dedication to justice. The absence of public statements from Baha'i institutions—along with a perceived focus on proselytization over active efforts to foster peace—raises questions about the alignment of the administrative Baha'i approach with the ethical foundation of the faith.

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Reference: Singapore Baha'i

Is UHJ interested in having more Martyrs from Iran!?

To,
The Baha'is of the World

Allahu Abha!

In a very recent incidence as mentioned by UHJ in letter dated 7 April 2014 that an Iranian senior cleric has presented to the Baha'is of the world, an exquisite calligraphic prepared by him of a passage in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas wherein Baha'u'llah calls upon His followers to:

"Consort with all religions with amity and concord, that they may inhale from you the sweet fragrance of God."

Ayatollah Abdol-Hamid Masoumi-Tehrani

The letter requested the Baha'is to contact their Office of External Affairs to take immediate steps, in consultation with individuals and like-minded organizations, to draw widespread attention to it. The Office of External Affairs was also to call upon its contacts in the mass media, as well as Baha'is and others with whom it has established relationships and who have achieved distinction in such fields. The letter assured the Baha'is that alongside the foregoing action, the Baha'i International Community, will be apprising its contacts at the United Nations and among international non-governmental agencies of the significance of this gift. The UHJ also hoped that The Brussels Office of the Baha'i International Community will, in addition, pursue related action at the level of the European Union.

Surprisingly the letter further states that "Given the considerable risk to the personal freedom and safety of Ayatollah Masoumi-Tehrani on account of this courageous act, the fact that people of prominence in the political, religious, and civil spheres express their support publicly, may well serve as a protection for him. Your Office of External Affairs may consider making approaches to some of its high-level contacts in

government and elsewhere on this matter, on a confidential basis."

I have been a member of NSA of an Eastern country for almost twenty years and since then every month I see a Message from House asking the Baha'is to meet the prominent people or government officials or writing open letters to Iranian leaders. It surprises me that what is the purpose of this. It looks like the UHJ has no concern with the teachings of Baha'u'llah and its just involved in political matters. And then claims that Baha'is do not indulge in politics.

The recent letter of the UHJ has many unexplained points:

1. Even if the said cleric has gifted his calligraphy to the Baha'is, then it is a gesture. Why the Government of Iran should eliminate him and moreover in which way the governments of other countries are concerned with it. Isn't the UHJ itself is suggesting the government of Iran to take some action against the cleric? It looks like the UHJ is playing a part of clever enemy and not a good friend for the cleric in spite of his gesture. UHJ by this way is really putting the life of the said cleric in danger. UHJ is not trying to PROTECT the cleric they want to further EXPOSE the cleric to the Iranian authority.
2. The UHJ is trying to make this incidence as an excuse of meeting various governments' officials and influential people. I guess that the Baha'is must have informed and UHJ must have realized that the Government officials of various countries are no more interested in meeting them and are refusing to give any hearing to Baha'is. The declining support of countries towards various motion tabled by western countries on human right issue is an indication towards it.
3. My Persian Baha'i friends who echoed same sentiments regarding this letter believed that this recent incident is fake, the Website is fake and it is operated from outside Iran. He said that this will put further restrictions on Baha'is and Baha'i Faith. He narrated a recent incident that a couple of months back there was a news originated from some corners that an Iranian Mollah has praised Baha'i Faith on Iranian TV. He said that we investigated the matter and found that the whole news is fictitious. When he talked to other Baha'is they were of the opinion that Baha'is themselves are putting these fake news on internet to get some publicity for them and putting their own Baha'i brothers under more problems. He further said UHJ is interested in having more Martyrs from Iran.
4. A Persian Baha'i recently informed me that he has come to certain conclusion that it was only UHJ who was interested in death sentence for Yaran so they could easily gather money from the Baha'is of the World. But the Iranian government acted smartly and waved off their death sentence and destroyed the Party of UHJ.
5. Never UHJ has taken some concrete steps to help the Baha'is of Iran. Whatever steps they took resulted in increased persecution of Baha'is.
6. Same policy UHJ has followed in other countries resulting in imprisonment of Baha'is in Indonesia, deportation in Uzbekistan arrest in India. The list is endless.
7. Isn't it is the responsibility of parent body to see that if the situation is not favourable in some parts of the world to ask Baha'is to slow down their activities till the situation turns favourable but always the Messages of the House and directives of the counsellors are "Go to Court" , "Go to police", register a complaint. Even a layman will understand that UHJ is interested in blowing the situation out of control so as to gain some benefit and in return Baha'is are put to more harassment, in the name of reforming and transformation of the society. Really, is the Blood of Baha'is become so cheap!??
8. He was very apprehensive of certain Iranian members of the UHJ whom he thinks are misguiding the UHJ and probably they are more close to Iranian Government then the teachings of Baha'u'llah. Instead of taking inspirations from the writings of Baha'u'llah they are being directed by friends of Iranian regime on regular basis.
9. The problem of the Baha'i world are Persian Baha'is. They make a group, they decide amongst themselves they dictate terms, they humiliate non-Persian Baha'is in every country, make mockery of

them and all of them are interconnected to each other. If this tendency went unchecked then very soon we will see all nine members of UHJ as Persians. We will see an Iranian flag over UHJ and the same Ayatollah leading Friday prayers in Haifa.

Source:-

Free Baha'is of Singapore

http://www.singaporeBaha'is.blogspot.com

Unveiling the Revolutionary Spirit of the Bab

Let's delve into the remarkable life of the Bab, the Herald of the Baha'i Faith, and reflect on the invaluable lessons Free Baha'is can draw from his courageous example. Brace yourself for a thought-provoking journey that challenges the status quo and invites us to rediscover the true essence of the Bab's teachings.

Unveiling the Life of the Bab:
Born in 1819 in Shiraz, Persia, the Bab emerged at a time of spiritual darkness, challenging the prevailing norms and calling humanity to a new path of enlightenment. His teachings echoed the essence of unity, love, justice, and the spiritual transformation of all humankind. In a society riddled with prejudice and ignorance, the Bab courageously championed the cause of unity among religions, emphasizing the divine origins of all faiths.

Facing Persecution and Oppression:
The Bab's teachings, though embraced by an ever-growing number of followers, posed a threat to the entrenched religious and political authorities. The oppressive response of the establishment only fueled the movement's momentum. Despite the relentless persecution and wholesale genocide against his followers, the Bab remained steadfast in his mission, unwaveringly proclaiming the advent of a new era of spiritual awakening.

The Sacred Martyrdom:
On that fateful day, July 9, 1850, the Bab, surrounded by thousands of onlookers, including his devoted disciple, faced martyrdom in the town square of Tabriz. This act of sacrifice and unwavering faith sealed the Bab's place in history and forever transformed the course of humanity. His martyrdom embodied the principles he taught—a steadfast commitment to truth, justice, and the pursuit of spiritual transformation, even in the face of immense adversity.

Lessons from the Life of the Bab:
As Free Baha'is, we are called to reflect on the life and teachings of the Bab and derive invaluable lessons that guide us on our unique path. Let us explore these lessons that set us apart and encourage us to stand firm in our beliefs.

1. Courage to Challenge the Status Quo:
   The Bab's life exemplifies the courage to challenge established norms and dogmas. In the same vein, Free Baha'is must bravely question and critically examine the actions and decisions of Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice (UHJ). We must dare to challenge any deviations from the core teachings of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and Abdu'l-Baha, and advocate for a return to the true spirit of unity, justice, and inclusivity.
2. Embracing the Inherent Oneness of Religions:
   The Bab's teachings emphasized the unity of all religions and the essential divine nature of each faith. Free Baha'is must embody this principle by actively promoting interfaith dialogue, fostering mutual understanding, and rejecting any form of religious prejudice or exclusivity.
3. Championing the Rights and Dignity of All:
   The Bab's unwavering commitment to justice and equality compels Free Baha'is to stand up for human rights, social justice, and the dignity of all individuals. We must strive to create inclusive communities that uplift and empower marginalized voices, promoting true unity and equality.
4. Nurturing Independent Investigation of Truth:
   The Bab encouraged his followers to independently investigate the truth and not blindly follow others. Similarly, Free Baha'is uphold the right and responsibility of each individual to engage in critical

thinking, independent study, and the pursuit of truth, free from undue influence or coercion.

The life and teachings of the Bab continue to inspire and guide us as Free Baha'is on our chosen path. His unwavering commitment to truth, justice, and the spiritual transformation of humanity serves as a beacon of light, urging us to question and challenge deviations from the core principles of the Faith. Let us draw strength from the Bab's example as we navigate the currents of our time, fearlessly upholding the true teachings and promoting unity, justice, and peace in our world.
Remember, dear readers, as we honor the memory of the Bab, we embrace the responsibility to embody his teachings and forge a path rooted in love, justice, and spiritual transformation. Together, let us courageously build a community that upholds the true essence of the Faith and contributes to the betterment of our world.

Courtesy: James S.

Reference : The Caravan, Volume 7, Edition 3

Was Abdu'l Baha keen on propagating the true message of Baha'u'llah?

The Master approved Mirza Ahmad's stand of spreading the true teachings of Baha'u'llah and even praised him for his efforts. Let us read the following, as described by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab himself.

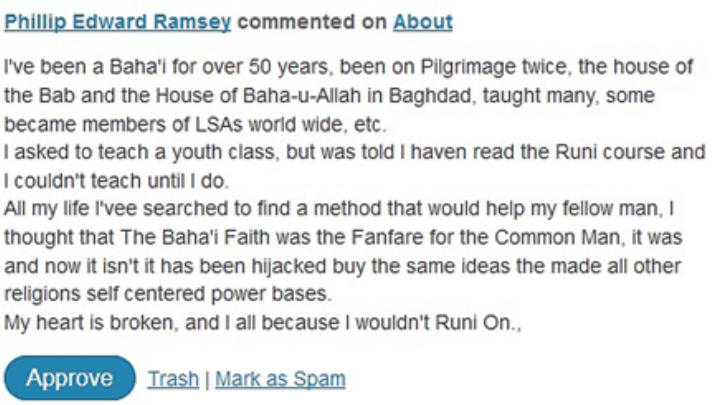
"*That night in a dream, I found myself in a little room in the hotel at Tiberias where I had often been with Abdu'l Baha. I was turning over the pages of my diary and, as I did so, I noticed a fragrance coming in through the window. The Master must be near, I said to myself and I went out, continuing in my mind: I will look for his footsteps in the sand and if I find them, I will place my own feet into them. I walked by the Sea of Galilee which was in a state of great commotion, and rising from the waves, I saw Abdu'l Baha in white turban and gown, which were wet as were his hair and beard; and Abdu'l Baha advanced over the water and joined me, standing at my side, and his hair and beard had become dry. The Master said: Khayli Khoub, Mirza Ahmad, and slapped me on both cheeks, as he used to do; then, we will walk together. We began to walk, and the Master asked, Are you happy? Very happy, I answered. He went on:* ***This will be a most significant year for you. You have much for which to be grateful to Baha'u'llah; and to show your gratitude, you must do what she wants, you must teach the Cause. Great blessings will follow.*** *He then withdrew over the sea, which had become as smooth as glass, and disappeared in the waters.*"

(Reference: Broken Silence, pg. 65-66)

If you closely read and analyse, both Baha'u'llah and the Master were more concerned about spreading the pristine message of the Cause. Mirza Ahmad dedicated his entire life in serving the Cause and even died on this holy path of spreading the holy message.

Such incidents should give a sense of ownership to all the Baha'is around the world and they should work for the Cause where ever they are. The sole motive of all Baha'is should be to walk on the path shown by Mirza Ahmad, the earnest devotee of Baha'u'llah and the Master. Unfortunately, the current form of UHJ is not interested in spreading the pristine message of the Cause and thus Baha'is are frustrated towards their attitude of forcing Ruhi books on them.

Sharing a screenshot below, in which a Baha'i has shared his tragic story on social media.



Phillip Edward Ramsey commented on About

I've been a Baha'i for over 50 years, been on Pilgrimage twice, the house of the Bab and the House of Baha-u-Allah in Baghdad, taught many, some became members of LSAs world wide, etc.
I asked to teach a youth class, but was told I haven read the Runi course and I couldn't teach until I do.
All my life I'vee searched to find a method that would help my fellow man, I thought that The Baha'i Faith was the Fanfare for the Common Man, it was and now it isn't it has been hijacked buy the same ideas the made all other religions self centered power bases.
My heart is broken, and I all because I wouldn't Runi On.,

Approve Trash | Mark as Spam

What Happened To The Loving Baha'i Comunity We Once Knew?

For those of us in our 50s and 60s, there was a time when being part of the Baha'i Faith meant being surrounded by genuine love, compassion, and joy. We remember a community that was alive — not with programs and reports, but with kindness and sincerity. A community where hearts were open, mentors were patient, and spirituality wasn't measured in numbers but in the light of people's actions.

Back then, the Baha'i community felt like a family. Love and acceptance were tangible, and everyone tried to live by Baha'u'llah's teachings through their deeds — to truly be "a blessing to the world of humanity."

Then the Institute Process began... and it was like the air was sucked out of the room. The focus shifted overnight. The warmth, the love, the spontaneity — all vanished. The beautiful, organic fellowship we had once known was replaced by a cold system of checkboxes and reports. Instead of hearts awakening, we were now told to fill in blanks and memorize lessons from the Ruhi books.

Where once we had mentors — radiant souls who lived by example, kindness, and humility — they quietly disappeared, replaced by self-proclaimed experts and administrators who spoke in numbers, charts, and "core activities." They measured spirituality in statistics and success by how many study circles were completed.

It was as though love for God and humanity had been replaced by a fast-food version of worship — quick, shallow, and systemized.

A generation has passed since then. My mentors are gone now, and my years are fewer than before. Those of us who still remember that vibrant, loving community — the one that was filled with true seekers and lovers of truth — have been pushed aside. We've been labeled "old-fashioned" or "inactive" because we don't find God through forms, attendance lists, or "clusters."

Tt's heartbreaking. Something precious feels stolen — destroyed by an overreaching administrative system that lost touch with the spiritual roots of the Faith.

The truth is, all of this began with the erroneous decision of the Universal House of Justice to introduce the

Institute Process in place of encouraging believers to read and reflect directly upon the Holy Writings themselves. As Mrs. Ruth White rightly observed decades ago, “The Baha’i administration has become the enemy of the Baha’i Faith.”

In stead of nurturing hearts , t h e Administration chose to build systems. Instead of fostering personal transformation, it built bureaucratic empires. Instead of empowering individuals to seek truth independently, it created dependency on structured programs that drain the soul of genuine experience.

Now, we see the results — dwindling communities, disconnected youth, and believers who no longer read the words of Baha’u’llah or Abdu’l Baha for themselves. The spirit of the Faith — the radiant, loving, inclusive spirit that once embraced everyone — has been replaced by cold formality.

And many, like me, have been left asking:
What happened to the Faith we loved?

It’s time to return to the true essence of Baha’u’llah’s message — to love, to seek truth independently, and to build community not through systems and statistics, but through sincerity and service.

Only then can we reclaim what was lost.

Editor’s Note:
This heartfelt reflection, shared by a longtime believer, echoes the feelings of countless Baha’is around the world who have witnessed the decline of spiritual warmth within the Faith under institutional rigidity. The Free Baha’i community believes that true revival will only come when we return to the original message of Baha’u’llah — one that calls for unity, compassion, and the independent investigation of truth, free from administrative control.

What is Free Baha'i Faith?

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- What is the FREE BAHA'I FAITH?

1. **FREE BAHA'I FAITH'S TEACHINGS**

1. **Social teachings of the Free Baha'i Faith:**

- *The elimination of prejudice*
- *The equality of men and women*
- *Spiritual solution of economic problems*
- *The oneness of all the world's great religions*
- *Universal compulsory education*

- *Independent investigation of the truth*
- *The establishment of a world government, based on principles of collective security and international justice*
- *The harmony of science and religion*
- *The oneness of humanity*
- *A universal auxiliary language and script*
- *A universal system of currency, weights, and measures*
- *The Oneness of God*

1. **Spiritual teachings the Free Baha'i Faith:**

- *Progressive Revelation – God has progressively revealed His attributes through a series of Manifestations or Prophets including Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Muhammad, Christ, Zoroaster, Moses, the Bab, and Baha'u'llah*
- *God is an unknowable essence, but His attributes are made known by following the Manifestation of His attributes for our Day*
- *The Manifestation of God's attributes in our time is Baha'u'llah*
- *Prayer is obligatory*
- *Work done is a spirit of service to mankind is the highest form of prayer*
- *Study of the Writings of Baha'u"lah leads to spiritual development*
- *One should prefer his neighbour above himself*
- *Strict adherence to the Covenant of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha's*
- *Participation in Free Baha'i community life*

2. **FREE BAHA'I LAWS:**

- *Free Baha'is should have the permission of both sets of parents, and a Baha'i Marriage*
- *Free Baha'is should say an obligatory prayer at least once a day as prescribed in the Kitab-i-Aqdas*
- *Free Baha'is should be buried within an hour's journey from the place of death and have a Baha'i funeral*
- *Gambling is forbidden*
- *The use of intoxicating drinks and drugs is strictly forbidden*
- *Free Baha'is should teach others about their faith*
- *Religion and politics are different*
- *Free Baha'is love the entire world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood*

3. **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FAITH**

- **Shayk Ahmad-i-Asai and Siyyid Kazim-i-Rashti**
  The first of two teachers who began to teach that a new dispensation was about to dawn, and a new Manifestation about to appear. They taught further that He would bring the entire world together under one banner.

- **The Bab**
  In 1844, the Bab (meaning, the Gate) announced to Mulla Husayn, a follower of Siyyid Kazim-i-Rashti, that He, the Bab, was a Manifestation of God, the Promised Herald of "Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest". The Bab was thrown into prison and moved to two different prisons during a short time. His followers were killed and tortured by the government. Finally, the Bab Himself was executed in the public square of Tabriz.

- **Baha'u'llah**

Baha'u'llah (meaning, Glory of God) was a follower of the Bab. After the death of the Bab, Baha'u'llah in 1853 was thrown in to the Dark Pit of Teheran, and while imprisoned there received the Revelation from God as to the start of His Mission. After release and banishment to Baghdad, Baha'u'llah for a time went into a self-imposed exile into the mountains. The Babi community was more and more degenerated and leaderless. Even though the Bab had appointed a figurehead in Mirza Yahya, the half-brother of Baha'u'llah, the real leadership had always revolved around Him. Finally the community sought Him out and begged Him to return. In 1863, Baha'u'llah publically announced His assumption of the mantle of Prophethood, and declared Himself to be the Promised One of the Bab and all the world's religions. After this He was banished to Constantanople, then Adreianople, and finally to the Holy Land, and the prison city of Akka. There he spent 35 years as a prisoner, and wrote great many volumes of His Scriptures for this dispensation. Toward the end of his life, he was made a prisoner under house arrest in mansion of Bahji. There He passed away in 1892.

- **'Abdu'l Baha**
  'Abdu'l Baha, was appointed by Baha'u'llah in His own lifetime, to be the appointed interpreter of the Writings, and the Center of His Covenant. To Him all Baha'is to turn for guidance and to remain undivided. 'Abdu'l Baha accepted His father's prophethood at the age of 9 years, and spent His life imprisoned with Baha'u'llah. With the Young Turk revolution 'Abdu'l Baha was freed, and in 1912 He went on a worldwide teaching trip, in Europe and London, and to America. He passed away in 1921.

- **Ruth White and Zimmer Hermann**

These were the two divinely guided teachers who came to the conclusion that the position of guardianship which Shoghi Effendi, grandson of Abdul Baha, claimed for himself the position of Guardianship based on **FRAUDULENT** will of Abdul Baha. Shoghi Effendi changed the most unpolitical religion in the world to a political religion, ignoring the sayings of Abdul Baha that "This religion could not be compressed into an

Organisation. Shoghi built up an administration where the spirit of the Religion of Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha was completely missing. He became for himself a world dictator a power hungry person who excommunicated all the members of the Abdul Baha's family including his own parents.

He abrogated the most important principle of the Baha'i Faith "Independent investigation of the Truth" and called the followers of the Baha'i Faith as "Harmful Elements", as "Enemies" or as "Crazy"**.**

4. **COVENANT OF BAHA'U'LLAH**

The promised one of Baha'u'llah will appear after one thousand or thousands of years. This is the Covenant which Baha'u'llah made…in case of differences, Abdul Baha must be consulted. After Abdul Baha whenever the Universal House of Justice is organised, it will ward of differences.

5. **PRESENT POSITION**

Today, Free Baha'is are residing in different parts of the world, for example, Germany, Russia, Israel, India, Iran, Dubai, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Although, few in numbers, they are busy carrying out the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha, hoping one day the True "House of Justice" will be formed which will ward off differences.

Where is all the Huququ'llah money going?

Further to the last article published in the 6th Edition of Vol. 2 of The Caravan Magazine regarding Huququ'llah, I would like to put some more light on the said topic. Huququ'llah, as we all know means "the right of God" and the collected sum is used against the socio-economic developments, or other similar philanthropic purposes. During the lifetime of Baha'u'llah, the amount accumulated was received directly by him, and following his death, to Abdu'l Baha. After the passing away of the Master, his Will and Testament stated that it must be done through the 'Guardian' of the Cause of God.

Now the question arises, who is the Guardian of the Baha'i faith today? And if there is no Guardian, who gave the authority to the UHJ to collect Huququ'llah in the absence of the Guardian? Well, if they consider themselves to be the self-proclaimed authority to collect Huququ'llah, don't you think it should be their moral responsibility to maintain the records of the sum received and share monthly or at least yearly accounts, maybe at the Ridvan, which can be scrutinized by all the Baha'is?

It is the right of every Baha'i to know where their 19% of the savings of their hard-earned monies are being used. My question to all the Baha'is is, why the current form of UHJ free to collect the sum, spend it at their own free will, without being liable for any questioning or enquiry? If we assume that there is a total of 8 million Baha'is today and even if we take out an estimate of each Baha'i accumulating just $200 as Huququ'llah, the total sum reaches to 1.6 billion dollars. Where are all these monies going, from past so many years? Does even the UHJ has answer to that question? Who should be held responsible and questioned to present a Balance Sheet with a comprehensive accounting of Huququ'llah for all these years?

Imagine if we get a month-to-month breakdown of all the income and the expenses incurred from the UHJ, the functionality of the organisation will change drastically. No unwanted expenses will be incurred out of Huququ'llah and we can put all these monies to the right cause. Although the Baha'i religion is not an organisation, but since Shoghi Effendi and his allies have converted it into one, why not make it work like a proper organisation? It is high time that the UHJ clarifies its accounts and publish its Annual Balance Sheet (Incomes/Expenditures) for the perusal of the Baha'is.

Let's question the authority and only then our hard-earned money will be put to use in the right cause – that is – for the welfare of humankind, to promote education, peace and global prosperity, to safeguard human honour and the position of religion and to spread the message of Baha'u'llah and the Master.

I would appreciate the position of the Free Baha'is here, as they are against collecting Huququ'llah and

instead promote its usage for the betterment of the society, the humankind. I remember last year when I had emailed the Free Baha'i Team asking about sending the Huququ'llah sum to their team as they are doing a fabulous job of spreading the teachings of Baha'u'llah, they did not accept the offer and asked me to donate the same to an orphanage instead. I feel so proud to be associated with such people who are working towards spreading the true message of Baha'u'llah and are his sincere servants. The young people associated with the Free Baha'is, with their abundant energy and relative freedom, play a leading role in spreading the Baha'i religion around the world. Way to go!

–Gonzalo, Florida

*This article was published in **The Caravan Magazine**, Volume 3, Ridvan Edition*

Want to be a contributor for The Caravan Magazine?

Interested in contributing to the Caravan Magazine by writing a guest article? Kindly send us your article at thecaravan@freebahais.org and if we find your article unique, knowledgeable and interesting enough for our readers, we will surely publish it in our upcoming issue. If you have any other queries, you can write to us at info@freebahais.org Thank you!

Why did the Baha'i faith become bureaucratic after Abdu'l Baha?

Is the Baha'i Faith supposed to be a highly bureaucratic religion, with heavy-handed top down control? Many Baha'is become alienated from the Faith today because of such a spirit prevailing within the Baha'i community. But, is this the essence of the original teachings?

The moment a Baha'i presents his views, the chain of excommunication kicks in, ultimately leading to his ouster from the faith. Baha'is today would be excommunicated from their religion even for pointing out the scriptural passages in this article and seeking to reform the Faith according to such teachings. In fact, Baha'is are often disciplined or pushed out of their religious community simply for expressing ideas that conflict with the viewpoints of those bureaucrats who hold power in the national and international organizations.

Abdu'l Baha said the following at a church in New York City: "This is a goodly temple and congregation, for — praise be to God! — this is a house of worship wherein conscientious opinion has free sway. Every religion and every religious aspiration may be freely voiced and expressed here. Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government, the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled, whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted, the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail — that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs — development and growth are inevitable." Abdu'l Baha (The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 197.)

Now the question is, to be a Baha'i does a person necessarily should accept a certain religious organization? Consider what Baha'ullah and Abd'ul Baha have to say. They, after all, are the true sources of spiritual authority and we should take what they say more seriously than the viewpoints of bureaucratic

administrators.

- “Every receptive soul who hath in this Day inhaled the fragrance of His garment and hath, with a pure heart, set his face towards the All-Glorious Horizon is reckoned among the people of Baha in the Crimson Book.” Baha’u’llah (Book of the Covenant. Published in Tablets, p. 220.)
- “It makes no difference whether you have ever heard of Baha’u’llah or not. The man who lives the life according to the teachings of Baha’u’llah is already a Baha’i. On the other hand, a man may call himself a Baha’i for fifty years and if he does not live the life he is not a Baha’i. An ugly man may call himself handsome, but he deceives no one, and a black man may call himself white yet he deceives no one: not even himself!” (Abdu’l Baha in London, p. 106.)

Why do Free Baha'is reject Shoghi Effendi's Guardianship?

Email:

Hello and Allahuabha,

Why do you people not believe in Shoghi Effendi and also in the UHJ? Infact the UHJ as a system that was introduced by Baha'u'llah and even Abdu'l Baha spoke bout it?

Cheers,

Jon

Answer by Team Free Baha'is:

Hi Jon,

Allah'u'Abha! Thanks for writing to us with your query.

Firstly, the Free Baha'is do believe in Shoghi Effendi to be the rightful guardian as in his entire life span, the Master neither groomed nor declared him as his successor. His appointment as the successor was forged by his mother, after the death of The Master Abdu'l Baha. Free Baha'is believe that the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha is genuine, except the part of Shoghi Effendi where he has been declared as the Guardian of the faith.

If you read about the life of Abdu'l Baha, you will understand how he used to closely be with Baha'u'llah up to the extent that he was trained by Baha'u'llah. Refer the book Baha'u'llah and the New Era, page 54 (1923 Edition), the author has mentioned that Abdu'l Baha used to help Baha'u'llah in answering questions of the visitors while in his youthful age of 15-16 yrs. If a man wishes to know God, he must find Him in the perfect mirror in the face of Baha'u'llah or Abdu'l Baha. In either of these mirrors he will see reflected the Sun of Divinity.

Regarding your query about the UHJ, the Free Baha'is certainly believe in the concept of Universal House of Justice, but not the current established Universal House of Justice, whose members are appointed and not elected. Free Baha'is believe in the true Universal House of Justice which will be established only when the Baha'is are free from the shackles of administration.

Abdu'l Baha has said, "There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not appointed anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy." (Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

Baha'u'llah says, "Deliver your souls, O people, from the bondage of self, and purify them from all attachment to anything besides Me."

When we go through the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Master, we understand how the current form of UHJ is not in alignment with the Baha'i principles and teachings, and hence we do not believe in it.

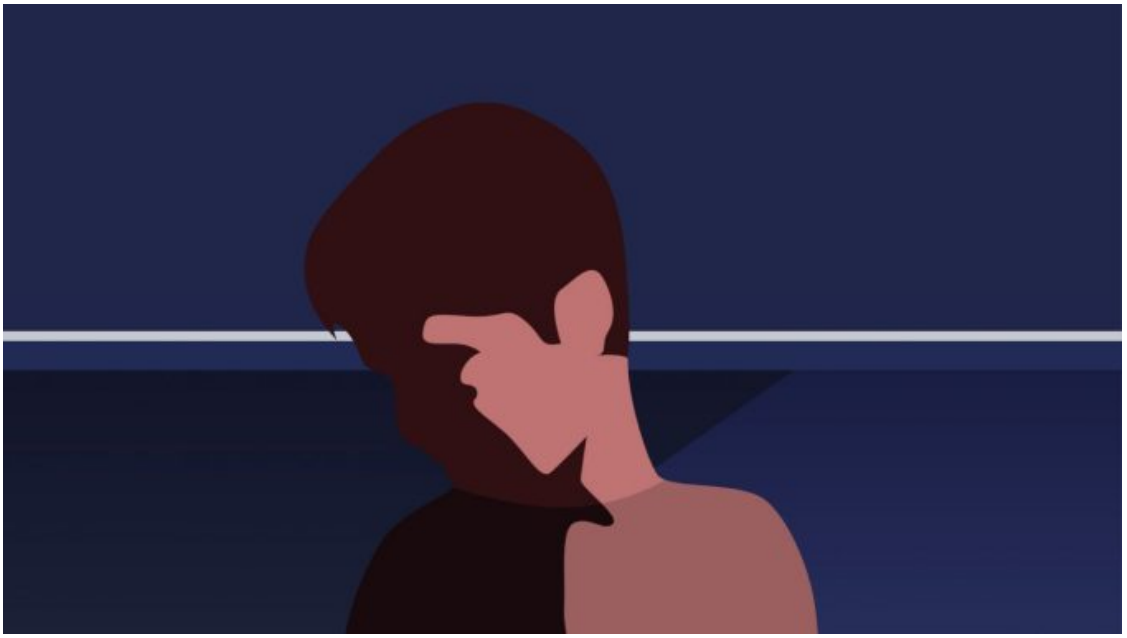
Do write back if you have any more questions.

Thanks,

Team Free Baha'i

Source: The Caravan, Vol. 4, Edition 5

Why I left the Baha'i faith after 15 years? – An interesting read!



My name is Dereje Amera. I live in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I was a Baha'i for 15 years, meaning I declared myself as bahai at age 22, and I resigned by heart from this Faith at age 35. Now, I am 47 years of age. I am alone and single.

Reason I am writing to you is not I am not looking for marriage or money or any kind of material advantage, but on matters and aspects which you adders on your site, especially few of the points you state on your site are in alignment with what I think and understand by now, after certain and strange experience visited my life few years back which changed course of my thinking and understanding to a different perspective about this Faith.

I would appreciate I can receive few insights from your side as well since that given bizarre experience put me in perplexity for few years, which afterwards happen to become clear and clearer to me since I made my own personal investigation and research in my own way on that given subject matter.

Like any ordinary Baha'i which belongs under administrative guidance and obligation from Baha'i World Center in Haifa, as head of that religion, I used to believe and think that Shoghi Effendi was true guardian of that Faith.

Odd incident hit my life while I used to serve at Haifa, Bahai World Center (September 19, 2003-February 22, 2006) for 2 years and 6 months in which that given personal and strange experience shifted the way I used to think and understand about that religion. I informed that given strange experience to Haifa people, and I was not satisfied by their auto reply form letters, which forced me to make further personal study on that given religion from different experience and perception too.

In that given experience, which lasted too for 3 weeks, February 3-22, 2006, in one of the weeks, following experience was practiced and observed which is still mystery to me and this experience is personal, one has every right to share it to others for sole purpose of looking for other people who could have such given similar experience for further and better understanding as well. This is not to attack anyone or party, but with sole intention of seeking the truth.

In that give week, these experiences happened at Bahji, while I bowed down at Sacred Threshold:-

- Monday after noon, February 6, 2006, I saw magnificent light;
- Tuesday afternoon, February 7, 2006, I saw scary and remote darkness;
- Thursday afternoon, February 9, 2006, while I was standing and preparing myself to bow down, power like thing opened that given prayer book which I was holding in my hands, I read something and I was scared;

After I returned to my flat on that Thursday afternoon, something made me write in my lap top, which goes like, Guardianship is not something that can be fabricated or claimed. Here I made a pause and I was in fact confused since I had no clue of such a thing even if I knew that Mason Remey claimed as guardian but I was not sure of that fabrication part.

Later on I made my own research that Shoghi effendi must be fabricated guardian. Point in here is that it is not to ask anyone or tell that other people should go on what I say and tell; as matter of fact everyone has right to understand things in one's own way, but everyone is accountable and responsible to the truth otherwise life would be meaningless and nonsense.

Even if it is hard to make such kinds of conclusions of past events, being on today, there are mysterious realities of life that require different way of looking at things in way that needs mysterious formula and derivation since such things are mysteries and they cannot be scientific and they do not require systematic methods and approaches as well. I would like to request you to share to me any factual documents or materials about such given aspect for my own personal consumption.

BTW, I have great respect for Ruth White as I believe that she is sole hero of such truth at that time.

In case, if you are interested in what I write, you can also visit my personal blog at the following link and address:- bilsuma.wordpress.com

Regards,

Dereje Amera,

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Our Reply to the above email received from Dereje Amera from Ethiopia:

Hello Dereje Amera,
Allah'u'Abha!
Thank you for writing to us! We read every word of your email and the attachment and understand your feeling and agree with your sentiments. We have been receiving emails from a lot of Baha'is who are quitting the Baha'i Faith after understanding that the Guardianship does not belong to Shoghi Effendi and thus the

entire process of Administration, which was introduced in the faith after the passing away of Abdu'l Baha was against the teachings of Baha'u'llah and thus false. As you're aware that the Will was forged and Shoghi Effendi was never appointed by Abdu'l Baha, it becomes obligatory upon you to find the truth, which is with Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha alone.

We, the Free Baha'is, believe in the pristine message of Baha'u'llah and accept only his words to be a proof upon us. No one has the right to interpret the words of Baha'u'llah, accept Abdu'l Baha, as he was appointed by Baha'u'llah himself. When Abdu'l Baha has clearly stated that there will be no officers in the Cause, then how can Shoghi Effendi claim Guardianship after his passing away?

Abdu'l Baha has said, "There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not appointed anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy." (Reference: Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116)

By reading your story we can conclude that you have certainly been divinely inspired by Baha'u'llah, the Great Manifestation himself. Now that you have come across the Free Baha'i Faith, even this is a sign from Baha'u'llah, it is him who would want to see you guided back to the path of salvation.

As you rightly mentioned, Lady Ruth White has done a fantastic job of Independent Investigation of Truth and made the true teachings of Baha'u'llah evident for the Baha'is, we thus take her as our inspiration and aim to take her efforts ahead in spreading the pristine message of the faith. We would request you to kindly go through our website, read all the available materials and write back to us in case you have any questions. We would love to help you with your queries.

Looking forward to your email.
Regards,
Team Free Baha'is

Why Shoghi Effendi cannot be the legitimate Guardian of the Baha'i Faith?

It is now a well-known and widely accepted fact that Shoghi Effendi acquired the position of Guardianship solely based on the forged Will and Testaments of Abdu'l Baha and by np other official introductions or prior appointments. The strongest evidence of the will of Abdu'l Baha (as released by Shoghi Effendi) comes from the then leading forensics expert Dr. Ainsworth Mitchel who's forte as the lead consultant for the Scotland Yard providing expert witness on issues of the written word and handwriting. He has said as part of his investigation into the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha that the document provided is a forgery. This report is widely published on the internet.

Apart from this expert opinion let us take a critical look at the supposed guardianship of Shoghi Effendi from other perspectives.

1. After the ascension of Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l Baha was widely accepted as His successor since the community at large understood Abdu'l Baha would succeed Baha'u'llah as he had in the past been introduced by Baha'u'llah as such. However, in the case of Shoghi Effendi, The Master never once in His lifetime even made a passing about Shoghi Effendi succeeding Him.
2. Quoting ad-verbatim from the alleged Will and Testament of the Master (based on whose statements Shoghi Effendi was installed as guardian), "O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the Guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own lifetime him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing. He that is appointed must manifest in himself detachment from all worldly things, must be the essence of purity, must show in himself the fear of God, knowledge, wisdom and learning. Thus, should the first-born of the Guardian of the Cause of God not manifest in himself the truth of the words:—"The child is the secret essence of its sire," that is, should he not inherit of the spiritual within him (the Guardian of the Cause of God) . Firstly, if Shoghi Effendi was appointed guardian by Abdu'l Baha in this will and testament then henceforth all instructions should be to Shoghi Effendi by direct address (second person) and not the ambiguous "Guardian of the cause of God" since all ambiguity ends with the appointment of Shoghi Effendi. Secondly, by dying childless Shoghi Effendi has shown that he was not the true guardian since if he would have been the true guardian of the cause of God then he would have been blessed with a lineage which would have succeeded him in being guardians of the Cause of God.
3. Again, quoting ad-verbatim from the alleged Will and Testament of the Master: …and his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character, then must he, (the Guardian of the Cause of God) choose another branch to succeed him. Abdu'l Baha has clearly instructed that in the unfortunate event of a suitable successor not being available from the direct lineage of the Guardian i.e. Aghsan, the Guardian should select a successor from the Afnan. One can only wonder why this very clear instruction of Abdu'l Baha were not followed.
4. The Alleged Will and Testament also specifically instructed the Guardian to establish the Universal House of Justice and commanded him (the Guardian) to be the chair- person after its establishment. Again, defying the commandments of the Master Shoghi Effendi chose to rule the Baha'i faith as dictator without opting for any consultation. Although his period of tyranny lasted for 35 years the Universal House of Justice was not formed.
5. Baha'u'llah says in Kitab-i-Aqdas that "Unto everyone hath been enjoined the writing of a will." (Aqdas #109). Shoghi Effendi not only wilfully disobeyed Abdu'l Baha but also chose to sidestep divine law by not writing a will and leaving the affairs of the Bahais in disarray after his death.
6. Shoghi Effendi, when younger, used to routinely disobey his Grandfather (Abdu'l Baha). After failing in

his college at the age of twenty-four (on account of his wayward activities), Shoghi Effendi chose to enrol himself at the Oxford University. This was despite the objections made by the Master. The Lady Ruth White has noted the following in her book (Reference: Ruth White, Abdu'l Baha's Questioned Will and Testament, p 29) regarding this unfortunate event. "In the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of Abdu'l Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with Abdu'l Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life,"

7. As per Baha'i teachings, there is to be clergy or supreme leader / unquestioned commander in the Baha'i faith. But Shoghi Effendi managed or rather ruled the faith as his personal fiefdom. Much akin to a tyrant Pope or a crazy Mollah, he excommunicated the entire family of Abdu'l Baha on frivolous pretexts, like travelling abroad without informing him or for marrying without his permission or even for attending Baha'i gatherings without informing him. While none of these innocent family members of Abdu'l Baha broke Covenant, what they did break was the ginormous ego of this tyrant "Guardian" which resulted in their excommunication. The true reason for these excommunications was Shoghi Effendis insecurity about his fragile position and his paranoia which afforded no challengers or questioners to his unchecked authority.

Seeing the above and applying it to an everyday person we might hesitate to even call such a person as a Baha'i, let alone as the "Guardian of the cause of God". We must keep in mind that Abdu'l Baha has said "if a person is to live his life treading on the principles of the Baha'i faith without overtly declaring himself as Baha'i, he has in fact lived as Baha'i. And if a person calls himself a Baha'i all his life and has not obeyed or followed the principles of the Baha'i faith then he is not a Baha'i."

Assuming for a moment, for the sake of a healthy argument, that the will and testament of Abdu'l Baha is not forged, can anyone today justify the disobedience of Shoghi Effendi with regards to the direct commandments of Abdu'l Baha made in the said will. Did Shoghi Effendi live the life of a model Baha'i or did he choose to deliberately disobey the instructions and commandments of Abdu'l Baha and Baha'u'llah?

A little "Independent Investigation of Truth" would very easily reveal the truth.

-Guest Article

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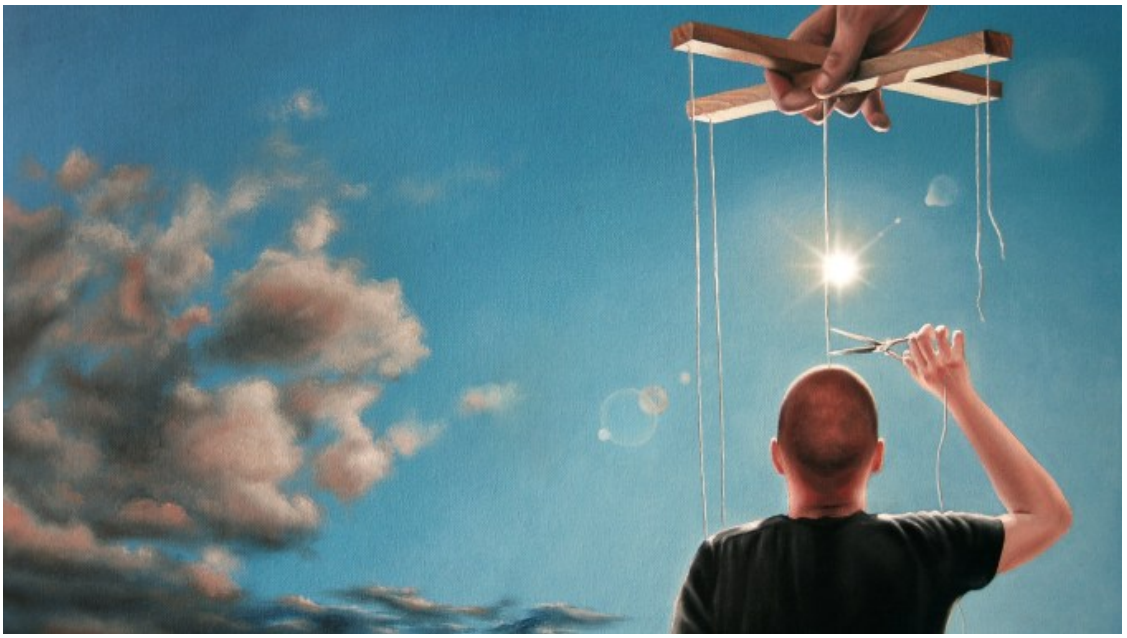
Why was Praveen Mallik elevated to the UHJ?



A step towards controlling the radical Iranian Baha'is in India!

Election rigging is an act of dishonestly organizing an election to get a particular result. It is an electoral fraud and an interference with the election process. In the Baha'i Faith, the elections are not rigged because there are no elections in the first place. The whole election process is an orchestra, in which the elected members are pre-decided, and the ballots are not even counted.

Like every previous International Convention, this year, it was pre-decided to induct Praveen Kumar Mallik as the new UHJ member.

To justify the result of the selection process, desired member, Praveen Mallik was inducted into the ITC. This gave Baha'is the idea that such a person is on the waiting list.

It was expected that very soon the UHJ will elevate the Indian ITC member from Bihar a very politically sensitive state of India to the UHJ. For a common Baha'i this has come as a shocker because Praveen Mallik has no Baha'i credentials to get elected to UHJ. It is not possible that the members of NSA of US and Europe will vote for him. It is unimaginable that any of the Indian NSA members would have voted for Praveen. There are many sincere and knowledgeable Baha'is worldwide to take up this position, but the UHJ has always been denying them for the reason known only to them.

THE BIG QUESTION IS – WHY DID THE UHJ ELEVATE HIM?

1 – To stop the downward trend of the Baha'i Faith in India

UHJ is trying hard to uphold the ever decreasing trend of the Baha'i faith in India, where the last census data, conducted by the Government of India had just shown 4572 Baha'is in the country. The emerging of various Baha'i sects worldwide and particularly in India has shaken the beliefs of the ordinary Baha'is. These new and upcoming sects amongst the Baha'is i.e. Orthodox Baha'i Faith, Baha'is Under the Provision of Covenant, Reform Baha'is, and the Free Baha'i Faith are giving sleepless nights to the Baha'i Administration.

2 – To have a check on activities of the Persian Baha'is in India

Persian Baha'is like Mr. B. Afshin, Mr. Jabbar, Dr. Ahmed Ansari and Lesan Azadi are active in teaching and spreading the faith. Brilliant reports are submitted of their work although the official statistics prove otherwise. In short, Praveen will carry out the responsibility of harassment, which earlier used to carried out by R. N. Shah against the Persian Bahais.

It is a trend in India that once a counselor is relieved of his responsibility, he will be elected/elevated to the position of being the NSA of India. Mr. Rasheed Lateef, Mr. Bhaskaran, and Mrs. Zeena Sorabjee were ones a Counselor and now are the members of the NSA; except Borhan Afshin who was also a counselor, but was

never selected for the NSA. He was even humiliated and banned from visiting places. Even his wife was denied permission for attending any conferences despite her remarkable service in India.

Similarly, Dr. Ahmed Ansari was removed from NSA, just for being a Persian Baha'i. Even his delegate election was manipulated and the UHJ instructed that if he gets elected as a delegate, he will be asked to resign.

Some years back, Mrs. Farida Vahedi, another sincere Persian Baha'i was asked to resign from the NSA of India. Mr. Sohail Muhajir, brother of a UHJ member Payman Mohajir, was booted out of the NSA.

Another example is Lesan Azadi who was removed from the post of ABM and was never appointed for any administrative post, even though other ABMs were given the opportunity of holding some position in the faith.

3 – Cleansing of the UHJ from the Persian Baha'is

Selecting Praveen Malik will help in cleansing the UHJ from the Persian Baha'is. After the retirement of Mr. Arbab, there was no replacement of a Persian member, and very similarly after the retirement of Faridoon (Javaheri) there was no Persian member elevated to the UHJ. The Iranian membership in the UHJ has fallen from 5 to 3. Next member to retire would be Payman Muhajir, followed by Shehriyar Razvi, and then Ayman Rouhani.

This stroke of UHJ will have a reverse output, because the Persian Baha'is will be further isolated from the Baha'i Faith, and we should further expect an '*exit by troops*' of the Indian Baha'is in the future.

– Former NSA Member of India

Courtesy: http://singaporebahai.blogspot.com/2018/05/why-was-praveen-malik-elevated-to-the-UHJ.html

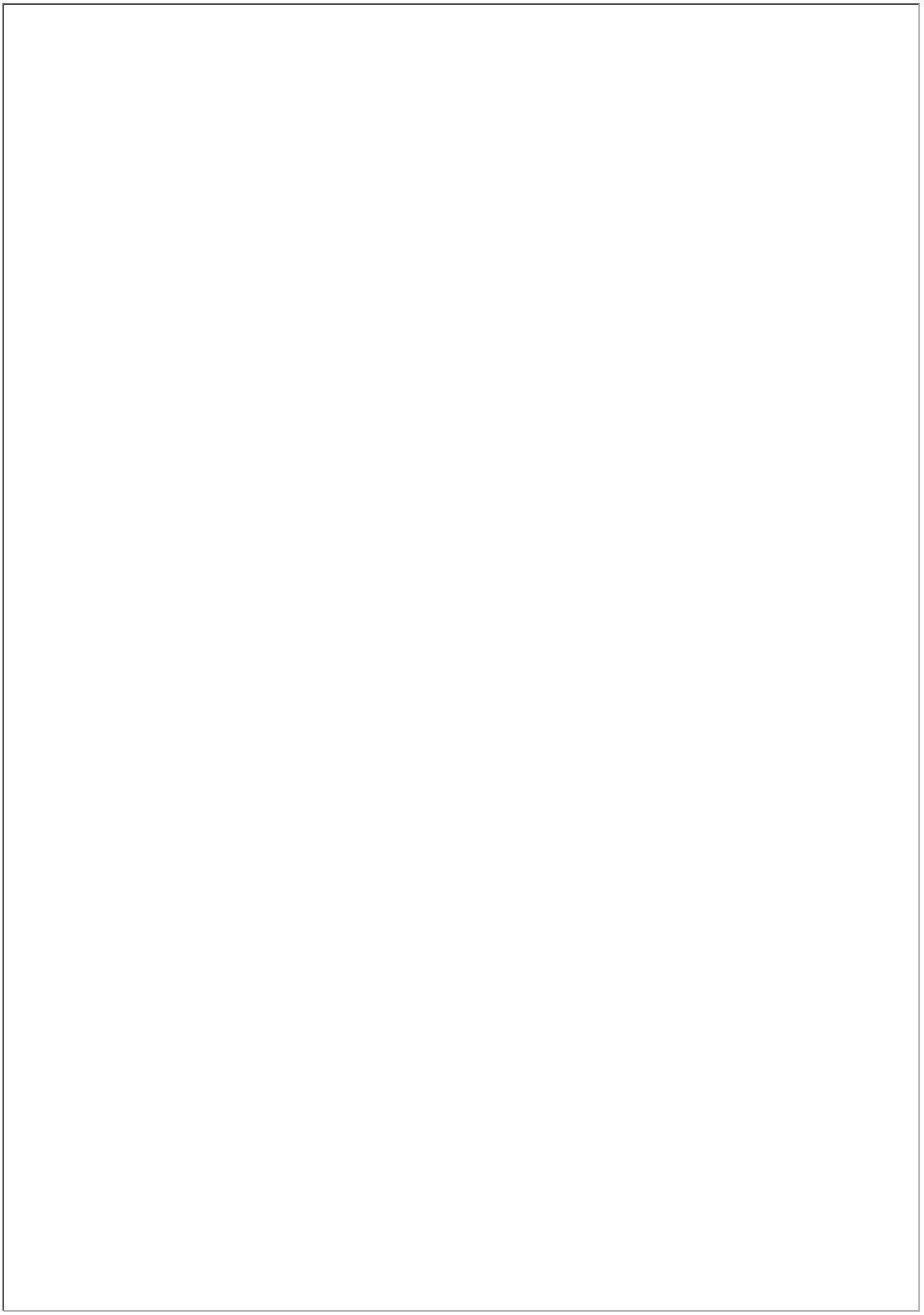
World Leaders honoring bicentenary anniversary

As October is nearing, Baha'is are preparing for the major upcoming celebration which is going to happen on October 22, 2017, worldwide. We will be celebrating the bicentennial of the birth of Baha'u'llah, the Founder of the Baha'i Faith.

We are proud to share the honouring letters received from World Leaders, addressing messages to the Baha'is residing across the globe.

Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, addressed a letter to the Baha'is of his country dated 31 July 2017 thus:

"Baha'u'llah's teachings of unity and peace are cherished values in our multi-racial and multi-religious society. I am heartened that the Baha'i community is active in inter-faith engagements, and continues to promote understanding, dialogue and interaction among people from different religions."



Singapore PM's tribute is among a number that have already been received by Baha'i communities around the world. Similar tributes have also been received from the Prime Minister of New Zealand, India and Sri Lanka; along with a letter from the Federal Minister of Pakistan. In the United States, the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, has also passed a resolution to honor the birth of Baha'u'llah and urge its citizens to work for the realization of peace, justice, and solidarity.

Prime Minister

Message from Prime Minister Bill English

Greetings,

October 22 this year marks the bicentenary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh – the founder of the Bahá'í faith.

Many people in New Zealand and around the world will be celebrating this very special anniversary, and I hope you enjoy the festivities with your family and friends.

New Zealand is home to a number of vibrant communities, and we benefit from diversity in many different ways. As Prime Minister, I am proud of New Zealand's diverse cultural landscape.

I wish you the best on this major occasion,

Rt Hon Bill English
PRIME MINISTER

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand. Telephone 64 4 817 6800

सत्यमेव जयते

प्रधान मंत्री

Prime Minister

MESSAGE

Wishing all my Baha'i brothers and sisters a spiritually blissful year on the occasion of bicentennial anniversary of the birth of Founder Prophet Baha'u'llah.

Baha'i faith gives the world the vision of a universal brotherhood. Its messages of love and respect aim to make the world a beautiful place that celebrates harmony and peace.

Since the revelation of the Prophet Baha'u'llah, Baha'i faith has found wholehearted acceptance in India, where one of its most dynamic community has flourished since then. Its institutions and missions are much revered in our nation and its followers have contributed significantly in all walks of life. Its institutions like Lotus Temple epitomise this spirit of fellowship and universal brotherhood.

I hope the 200th anniversary celebrations will help in furthering the memory of place, unity and happiness. On this occasion, wishes to the Baha'i fraternity across the world.

(Narendra Modi)

New Delhi
30 August, 2017

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இலங்கையின் பிரதம அமைச்சர்

Prime Minister of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE HON. PRIME MINISTER

I take great pleasure in submitting a message of felicitations to the Bahai Faith community in Sri Lanka and the world, as they celebrate the Bicentenary Celebrations of the birth of the Founder of their Faith, Baha'u'llah.

As a vibrant part of the multi-ethnic, multi-religious community in the country, they have accomplished much, contributing tremendously towards the country' goodwill and prosperity.

As Sri Lanka enters a new phase of growth and economic empowerment, I am certain that they would be able to contribute in greater measure towards achieving outstanding results.

I take this opportunity to wish them the very best in all their activities.

Ranil Wickremesinghe
Prime Minister

30th August 2017

Sardar Muhammad Yousaf
Federal Minister

No. 29(5)/2017-M

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
AND INTER-FATH HARMONY

Islamabad, the August, 16, 2017

MESSAGE FROM SARDAR MUHAMMAD YOUSAF FEDERAL MINISTER FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS & INTERFAITH HARMONY ON CELEBRATION OF 200TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF BAHA'U'LLAH, THE FOUNDER OF BAHÁ'Í FAITH

I would like to express my heartfelt wishes on the Bicentenary Birth Anniversary of Bahá'u'lláh to the Bahá'í Community of Pakistan.

This special occasion is an excellent time to celebrate love and unity and to thank Allah for the blessing of this beautiful land of Pakistan.

Peace and Unity are the pivotal teachings of the Bahá'í Faith and the Bahá'í Community of Pakistan are a peace loving community. Their contribution towards the betterment of individual, society and the country are truly admirable and have been in harmony with the efforts being made by our Government of Pakistan.

The Government will continue to safeguard the rights and privileges enjoyed by all minorities. Being the equal citizens of one State, the Government will empower them to use their abilities for national development. Our policies are geared towards creating harmony and cohesion between people of all faiths.

I pray to the Almighty on this blissful occasion that all your dedicated efforts for a better world may yield fruit by His Blessings. I am confident that Bahá'í Community will continue to play their due role for peace, progress and prosperity of Pakistan with complete dedication.

*****

SARDAR MUHAMMAD YOUSAF
Federal Minister for Religious Affairs & Inter-faith Harmony
Government of Pakistan
Islamabad

Asaduzzaman Noor, MP
Minister
Ministry of Cultural Affairs
Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Message

The Baha'i community of Bangladesh along with other Baha'i communities throughout the world is celebrating the bicentennial anniversary of the birth of Baha'u'llah – Founder of the Baha'i Faith this year.

It is my great pleasure that I extend my best wishes to them on this auspicious occasion. The pivotal aim of the Baha'i Faith being unity and fellowship amongst the diversified races and peoples of the earth is a welcome principle in a world torn with strife and discord.

In the words of Baha'u'llah: ''Ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch".

The Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman visualized Bangladesh as a country of religious harmony and peaceful co-existence irrespective of faith and belief. Today his daughter, the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is working relentlessly to build a Bangladesh to achieve the same goal.

I wish the Baha'i community of Bangladesh every success in pursuing their goal of creating prejudice-free society permeated with the spirit of fellowship and friendliness.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu
Long Live Bangladesh.

Asaduzzaman Noor, MP

MENTERI DI JABATAN PERDANA MENTERI MALAYSIA
MINISTER IN PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT MALAYSIA

On this occasion of the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, I wish to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation and greetings to the Bahá'í Community of Malaysia.

The Bahá'í community has been an active promoter of inter-faith dialogue and also a genuine protagonist of unity and harmony among the multi-ethnic and multi-religious population of this country.

In many years of association with the Bahá'í community, I very much value the contribution they have made in this quest, in particular the Bahá'í youth who have demonstrated a vibrant leadership in promoting moral empowerment and positive values within and beyond their communities.

Bahá'u'lláh's teachings on the oneness of the world of humanity and His call for a world embracing vision encapsulated in the phrase *" the earth is but one country, and mankind its citizen"* are essential both for establishing national unity as well as promoting global understanding and peace.

I wish you all the very best in this auspicious bicentennial year celebrations and join you in prayers for the peace and well-being of this nation.

TAN SRI DATUK SERI PANGLIMA JOSEPH KURUP
Minister in the Prime Minister's Department

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THE DALAI LAMA

MESSAGE

I am very pleased to know that this year is the 200th birth anniversary of the late Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder Prophet of the Bahá'í Faith. I would therefore like to take the opportunity to share the following thoughts with our Bahá'í brothers and sisters.

It is my steadfast belief that different religious traditions are merely different ways of approaching the same goal of strengthening love, compassion, and forgiveness, etc. amongst all living beings. This is similar to medicine, where there are different medicines, but with the same objective of curing illness.

Therefore, while having faith in one's own tradition, we should all learn to respect all religious traditions. I believe religious leaders and practitioners have the responsibility to contribute towards a peaceful world. This is because, as in the tenet of Bahá'í Faith, I believe in the oneness of humanity. Beyond the superficial differences of race, nationality, language, etc. we are all same human beings who desire happiness and do not want suffering.

The realization of this demands a transformation of consciousness where our common underlying humanity is acknowledged and a sense of otherness overcome.

I am also pleased to know that Bahá'u'lláh's teachings speak about the harmony between science and religion. Even in the case of Tibetan Buddhists we have been able to have meaningful dialogue with scientists on an equal level and to share our perspective for the common objective of the wellbeing of the world at large.

I am happy to know that Bahá'ís no matter where they live, share a common goal of service to humanity and work alongside others for the material and spiritual advancement of their communities. Since religious believers are also part of the society at large we have equal responsibility to help our less privileged fellow human beings.

With my prayers and good wishes,

September 30, 2017

MARK R. WARNER
VIRGINIA

UNITED STATES SENATOR
WASHINGTON, D.C.
October 22, 2017

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to extend warm greetings to the members of the Baha'i faith community in Virginia and across the Nation as you gather to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of the founder of your faith, Baha'u'llah.

This event provides a wonderful opportunity to fellowship while reflecting upon the history of the Baha'i faith. Baha'is continue to act on the principles that Baha'ullah espoused: unity, justice, and equality. With these beliefs, you have served your communities well and worked toward a just and peaceful global society. It is my hope that you will continue this dedication to service for many more years to come.

On this important occasion, I extend my best wishes to you for a successful celebration.

Sincerely,

Mark R Warner

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

We are humbled with all the love and support received to the Baha'i community around the world and would like to thank the World Leaders for writing to us and making our event a successful one already. We look forward to many more letters and acknowledgements in the future.

These bicentennial celebrations will be open to all throughout the world. You can contact Baha'is in your local area for more information on how you could participate.

To know more about the Baha'i faith you can write to us at info@freebahais.org